



THE INDEPENDENT

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IN THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW

Public to choose 'people's peers' in Blair's new House of Lords

BY ANDREW GRICE
Political Editor

ORDINARY PEOPLE will sit as "people's peers" in a reformed House of Lords under sweeping proposals to be unveiled by the Government today.

After the 750 hereditary peers lose their right to sit and vote in the Lords next year, members of the public will be able to nominate another person to sit in the second chamber as a life peer.

The surprise move, to be announced in a White Paper today, is part of Tony Blair's drive to head off Tory allegations that the Lords will be packed with "Tony's cronies" handpicked by the Prime Minister after the hereditaries disappear from Parliament.

Those nominated as "people's peers" will be vetted by a new seven-member Appointments Commission, which will consider the special qualities they could bring to the legislative process.

Initially, the number of ordinary people joining the Lords is expected to be limited to about 20. But ministers will today argue that the symbolic move will be an "important modernising step" which ensures the House becomes more representative of ordinary people. They would sit during the "transitional" House which will exist between the removal of the hereditaries and the introduction of a new, partly elected second chamber.

If the "people's peers" proved popular, the idea could form part of "stage two" of Labour's reforms and the number of them could be increased. In the new-look chamber, which Mr Blair hopes to get on the statute book before the next general election, the "people's peers" would sit alongside



The 22nd Lord Gray, a Conservative peer, at the House of Lords. He could be the last of his line to have a hereditary seat in the House

Andrew Burtman

some members elected directly by the voters and others nominated from the planned regional assemblies for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Allowing the public to put names forward mirrors the change to the honours list brought in by John Major, which has led to thousands of people being nominated each year.

Once the new commission had approved such a nomination for a "people's peer", Mr Blair would rubber-stamp the name and forward it to Buckingham Palace. Ministers have decided the Queen will retain the final say on who is raised to the peerage, to answer Tory claims that abolishing the hereditaries would undermine

the hereditary monarchy. Mr Blair is to give up his "sole power of patronage" to appoint peers, although he would still nominate Labour representatives in the second chamber.

The White Paper is part of a three-pronged plan for Lords reform to be announced today in parliamentary statements by Margaret Beckett, the Leader

of the Commons, and Baroness Jay, Leader of the Lords.

They will set up a Royal Commission to produce proposals for "stage two". It will report by the end of this year to enable Mr Blair to fast-track his reform plan. It will be chaired by Lord Butler, who retired as cabinet secretary and head of the civil service a year ago. The

Government's terms of reference for the commission will make clear that the wholly elected Commons would remain supreme over a partly elected second chamber. The new House of Lords would get greater powers to amend legislation but it would not be able to block financial measures such as the Budget.

The Bill to scrap the 800-year-old rights of the hereditaries to sit and vote in the Lords will reveal that the 750 peers who inherited their titles will also be deprived of their "club rights" - such as free parking and use of the restaurants and tea-rooms at the Palace of Westminster. "It will be the end of using Parli-

THE PROPOSALS

- Hereditary peers to lose their rights to sit and vote in the Lords
- People's peers to be appointed from suggestions by the public
- Royal Commission to report within one year
- Stage two reform - partly elected upper house - to be law before the election
- An independent body will vet the creation of peers, including crossbenchers to stamp on 'cronism'

ment as a gentleman's club and living like a lord at the taxpayers' expense," one minister said.

The Bill is expected to be amended during its passage through the Lords so that it will grant a temporary reprieve to 91 of the hereditaries until "stage two" takes effect. This formed the compromise plan negotiated secretly with Mr Blair by Lord Cranborne, former Tory leader in the Lords, which led to him being sacked by William Hague.

Ministers are dangling the Cranborne proposals as a "carrot" before Tory peers in the hope that the reprieve will persuade them not to use their majority to delay the Bill for a further year.

Lord Strathclyde, the Tory leader in the Upper House, said that the Opposition would oppose the measure vigorously in both Houses because it was a "bad" and "half-baked" Bill. But Lord Strathclyde said the Tories would back the Cranborne proposals to save some of the hereditaries.

Nato ultimatum for Serbs

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

AS FIGHTING continued in Kosovo, with Serb forces pounding villages once again, Nato's two top commanders told Slobodan Milosevic yesterday he faced the threat of air strikes if he did not stick to the October ceasefire agreement. They also demanded full access for war crimes investigators to probe last week's massacre of ethnic Albanians in Racak.

General Wesley Clark, Nato's supreme commander, and General Klaus Naumann,

chairman of the alliance's military committee, were due to hold a second round of talks in Belgrade last night with the Yugoslav President before reporting back to Nato ambassadors in Brussels - at which point a decision on the use of force could be taken.

In Washington, senior officials warned that the "activation order" which brought the alliance to the brink of air

strikes three months ago was still in force, and that Nato attacks could start "within days". Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, told the Commons that the British component of the force could be ready within 96 hours.

The Yugoslav government announced that William Walker, the American head of the international monitoring mission in Kosovo, could stay in the country an extra 24 hours, after originally being ordered to

leave by today. Otherwise there was no immediate hint of breakthrough in the Belgrade talks, while Serb security forces and ethnic Albanians allowed no let-up in their conflict.

Yugoslav army artillery continued to pound the hillsides around Racak, scene of the slaughter of 45 Albanians last weekend. One Serb policeman was killed and two were wounded in separate clashes with the Kosovo Liberation Army.

Villagers cower, page 13

Disgraced Aitken faces jail

BY KIM SENGUPTA

THE FORMER cabinet minister Jonathan Aitken could face a jail term after pleading guilty at the Old Bailey yesterday to perjury and attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Aitken, once tipped as a future Conservative leader and prime minister, became the first former cabinet minister this century to be convicted of serious crimes after admitting he lied under oath. He also admitted that he drew up a false statement for his daughter, Victoria, to sign to support his lies.

He will be sentenced in June. The maximum sentence for perverting the course of justice is life imprisonment and for perjury seven years.

The charges relate to the defamation action Aitken brought against *The Guardian* and Granada TV's *World in Action* programme over claims that a £1,000 hotel bill for his stay at the Paris Ritz in Sep-

tember 1993 was paid by a wealthy Saudi contact.

At the time, he vowed: "If it falls to me to start a fight to cut out the cancer of bent and twisted journalism in our country with the simple sword of truth and the trusty shield of British fair play, so be it. I am ready for the fight."

The libel action collapsed and Aitken was charged with the serious criminal offences which led to yesterday's case. Aitken, a former chief sec-

retary to the Treasury, and minister for defence procurement, also pleaded not guilty yesterday to two further charges of perverting the course of justice and conspiring with his ex-wife, Lolica, and another person to pervert the course of justice. He was given conditional bail.

Aitken also faces civil litigation as result of his failed libel action which has left him with £2m in legal debts to *The Guardian* and Granada TV.

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THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD Australia 6.90 AS Belgium 30 BF Cyprus 1.20 CE Denmark 18.00 DK France 16.00 FF Gibraltar 50.80 Hungary 295 foris Italy 5,000 L Malta 0.65c Netherlands 6.50 (sat) Portugal 350 Es Spain 325 Ps Switzerland 5.00 SF, Israel 12.00 Shk Luxembourg 60.00 LF Netherlands 5.50 gulder Norway 26.00 NK Singapore 588.55 S\$ Sweden 23.00 SKr USA \$3.50

WINTER GERMS ARE BACK

TAKE DOUBLE ACTION

HELPS YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM GIVE MAXIMUM PROTECTION FROM COLDS AND FLU

DOUBLE ACTION



IN THE INDEPENDENT TOMORROW

My twenty-four year-old son still lives at home. He doesn't work and I'm scared he has discovered drugs. Should I kick him out?

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE'S DILEMMAS

THE BEST WRITING, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT: DEBORAH ROSS, HOWARD JACOBSON, HAMISH MCRAE, MARK STELL, ROBERT FISK, TERENCE BLACKER, SU'SANNAH FRANKEL, JOHN WALSH, RICHARD WILLIAMS, DAVID AARONOVITCH, DEBORAH ORR, THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, MILLS KINGTON, SUE ARNOLD, ANDREAS WHITFAM SMITH

FILM: ANTHONY QUINN REVIEWS HILARY AND JACKIE
PLUS EDUCATION LAW & FAST TRACK

Concern over inflation rise

INFLATION CLIMBED above its 2.5 per cent target last month for the first time since August. The figures sent a ripple of panic through industry and unions, for fear that they would persuade the Bank of England out to cut interest rates again.

The underlying rate of inflation edged up to 2.6 per cent in December. Price increases on the high street ahead of Christmas were partly to blame, and so were bigger than normal increases in the price of potatoes and other seasonal foods.

Despite the unexpected increase in target inflation, John Monks, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, immediately called for a 1 per cent reduction in interest rates. "The Bank should not be deflected from its top priority of restoring industrial confidence," he said.

Jan Peters, deputy director of the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "Our surveys show members fail to see any significant inflationary pressures. We will look to the Bank of England to reduce rates

BY DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

ultimately towards the European level." The Engineering Employers' Federation, reporting a slowdown in pay settlements in the industry in December, agreed.

Separately, a survey yesterday showed a modest improvement in consumer confidence this month, although it often picks up after Christmas. Figures for gross domestic product (GDP) in the final quarter of 1998, due on Friday, will be a key influence on the Bank's next decision.

Analysts in the City stuck with their view that homebuyers will enjoy further rate reductions, perhaps as early as next month but more likely after a short pause.

The rise in inflation could prove temporary, as recent years have seen a pattern of bigger price rises in December followed by bigger cuts in the January sales.

The headline rate of inflation, the figure used in many pay deals, edged down from 3 per cent to 2.8 per cent this month.



A road roller yesterday destroying counterfeit software, worth millions of pounds, at the Microsoft head office in Reading.

Lawrence officer to face tribunal

THE POLICE officer who was second-in-command of the Stephen Lawrence murder investigation will face a disciplinary tribunal despite announcing his retirement, Scotland Yard said last night.

A spokesman said Detective Inspector Ben Bullock will go before a tribunal on 22 March, six weeks before his retirement date. He will be charged with seven counts of neglect of duty. The announcement was seen as a response to the outcry to oust last week that Det Insp Bullock had submitted his retirement papers. He was the only serving officer that the Police Complaints Authority recommended for disciplinary action.

It is unprecedented for a tribunal date to be set so soon

BY KATHY MARES

after a PCA recommendation. The Metropolitan Police is thought to have accelerated the process to satisfy demands for some kind of public retribution over the Lawrence case.

Last week, Stephen's parents, Neville and Doreen Lawrence, were said to be devastated at the prospect of every officer in the investigation escaping punishment. All the other senior officers have retired and are thus, according to the law as it stands, immune from disciplinary action.

The PCA called last week for the law to be changed. Jack Straw, Home Secretary, said he would consider recommendations by the Lawrence inquiry, due to issue its report next week.

The Yard spokesman said police had never ruled out disciplinary proceedings, despite Det Insp Bullock's impending retirement. "The charges against Mr Bullock have not been dropped. There is still something that can be done, which is to hold the tribunal before he leaves his job."

The Yard and the PCA took 10 months to agree to the setting of the charges against Det Insp Bullock. The PCA said in March last year that he was recommended for dismissal against him. He denies any neglect of duty.

In a statement, Scotland Yard said: "As was made clear last Thursday, 14 January, the Metropolitan Police Service will continue with the disciplinary process against Det Insp Bullock even though he has given notice of his intention and entitlement to retire... The tribunal to hear the charges of neglect of duty... has now been set for March 22 this year."

The force said that it had informed Det Insp Bullock of the tribunal, made up of two PCA representatives and a senior Metropolitan Police officer.

It said that force solicitors were currently preparing the papers for the case and these will be served on Det Insp Bullock shortly. Det Insp Bullock will then have 14 days to respond to the charges, Scotland Yard said. It has said it has no option but to accept his retirement under current disciplinary regulations, despite the controversy surrounding the case.

Man detained by police dies

A BLACK man who collapsed shortly after being handcuffed while naked and put in a van by eight police officers has died.

Roger Sylvester, 30, had been on a life-support machine since his detention in Tottenham, north London, nine days ago. It was disclosed yesterday that he died on Monday.

His family issued a statement yesterday saying that they did not accept that Mr Sylvester's detention by the Metropolitan Police was necessarily lawful or that officers treated him with proper care.

An outside police force - Essex - has been brought in to investigate the case, which will be overseen by the Police Complaints Authority.

Mr Sylvester was detained after police were called to a disturbance outside a block of flats in Tottenham on 11 January. Police say that officers in three cars arrived just before 10pm and found a naked man banging on the door of a neighbour in an "aggressive and vociferous manner".

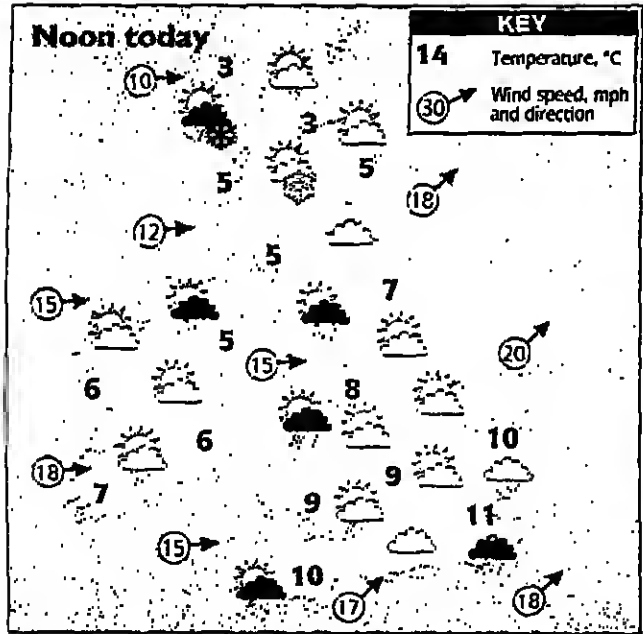
BY JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

"Prior to police attending, the man had been rolling about on the floor in the garden area in an agitated state," said a Scotland Yard spokeswoman.

The man was handcuffed and detained under the Mental Health Act. He was taken in a police van to St Ann's Hospital, north London, to be assessed by a mental health practitioner. The police spokeswoman said: "While at the hospital the man suffered respiratory failure and was resuscitated." He was later taken to the Whittington Hospital, also in north London, and placed on a ventilator.

The family's statement said: "The family now awaits the outcome of the post-mortem and the police investigation of their complaint. The family does not accept Roger's detention was necessarily lawful or that he was treated with due care by the police. These and other matters require detailed and robust investigation."

BRITAIN TODAY



FORECAST

General situation: Rain in the south and south-east of England will clear away only slowly and it will gradually become brighter. The rest of England and Wales will have sunny spells and showers, most of the showers in the west where they will be heavy this afternoon with the risk of hail and drizzle. Northern Ireland and western Scotland will also have some thundery showers with snow over the mountains and hills possible elsewhere. Eastern Scotland will have better sunny spells but also the odd shower.

Case 5 & SE England, London, E Anglia: Outbreaks of rain will slowly move away to allow brighter weather to move in from the north-west. A fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 10-12C (50-54F).

Midlands, E England, Channel: Any early rain will clear away to leave some sunny spells for the afternoon. However, there could be the odd isolated shower. A moderate south-westerly wind. Max temp 9-11C (48-52F).

NW & SW & East N England, NE England, Lake Dist, Isle of Man, Wales: It will be a day of sunshine and showers. The showers will be heaviest and most frequent in the west where they may be thundery with hail. A moderate south-westerly wind. Max temp 7-10C (45-50F).

N Ireland: Sunny spells will be spoiled by showers. Some of the showers will be heavy and of hail. A moderate westerly wind. Max temp 7-10C (45-50F).

SW & NW Scotland, Glasgow, N & W Isles: Frequent, heavy and thundery showers, some of which will be wet, especially over the hills. A moderate westerly wind. Max temp 3-6C (37-43F).

SE & NE Scotland, Edinburgh, Aberdeen: Early sunny spells with the risk of a light shower later. A fresh south-westerly wind. Max temp 3-6C (37-43F).

OUTLOOK

Showery rain and sleet will move across Scotland and Northern Ireland tomorrow. The rest of the UK will be mainly dry and bright. Rain will affect Scotland and Northern Ireland on Friday. Elsewhere it will be dry with sunny spells.

TRAVEL

London: A12 Green Man Roundabout, Laystons. Major roadworks on new M11 link road, until 21st December. Central London A10 between Foston and M11. Roadworks and bridge maintenance work at Shepherd Hill, until 14th February. Bristol: M5 J16-19. Major roadworks on Avonmouth Bridge, until 21st June 2001. Luton: A505 between J27 Slough and J28 Luton. Roadworks, contraflow and a single speed limit either side of Charnock Road Services, until 15th February. Greater Manchester: A57, Newhey lanes Manchester-bound, due to Metrolink construction work, until 28th February. South Yorkshire: A11 between J64 Tinsley Viaduct (A6109) & J64 Tinsley Viaduct (A6178). Sheffield: Carriageway reduced to 2 lanes southbound, until 21st November 2000. Dumfries and Galloway: A74 between Beattock and J18 Annan. Major roadworks, until 21st January. A14 Peterhead Docks. Roadworks, until 28th February. A14 Newcastle Call 0336 401777 for the latest local and national traffic news. Source: The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).

LIGHTING UP

	4.30pm	to	8.31am
Belfast	4.31pm	to	8.05am
Birmingham	4.30pm	to	8.04am
Bristol	4.25pm	to	8.30am
Glasgow	4.26pm	to	8.11am
London	4.26pm	to	8.11am
Manchester	4.26pm	to	8.11am
Newcastle	4.18pm	to	8.15am

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
Avonmouth	8.53	13.4	9.12	13.2
Cork	7.14	4.4	7.31	4.3
Dunfermline	7.24	5.5	7.44	5.3
Dover	12.24	6.5	12.39	6.5
Dun Laoghaire	12.55	3.9	1.05	4.1
Falmouth	6.55	5.3	7.15	5.1
Glasgow	2.04	3.2	2.21	3.6
Harwich	1.19	3.9	1.43	3.9
Holyhead	5.05	12.00	5.7	12.00
Hull (Albert Dock)	7.50	8.5	8.08	8.6
Kings Lynn	8.00	6.5	8.06	7.1
Leith	4.15	5.4	4.28	5.5
Liverpool	12.36	9.2	12.55	9.5
Millwall Haven	7.52	6.9	8.12	6.7
Newquay	6.44	6.9	7.04	6.8
Portland	8.51	2.1	9.15	1.9
Purcellmouth	12.40	4.6	12.57	4.7
Swansea	9.42	4.9	10.02	4.8
Scarborough	5.45	5.6	5.51	5.8
Wick	12.51	3.4	12.59	3.7

AIR QUALITY

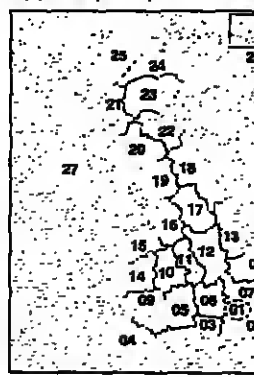
	NO _x	SO ₂
London	Moderate	Good
S England	Good	Good
Wales	Good	Good
E England	Good	Good
N England	Good	Good
Scotland	Good	Good
N Ireland	Good	Good

SUN & MOON

Sun rises: 07:55
Sun sets: 16:28
Moon rises: 09:24
Moon sets: 19:57
First Quarter: Jan 24

WEATHERLINE

For the latest forecast call 0331 5009 followed by the two digits for your area. Source: The Met Office. Calls charged at 50p per min (inc VAT).



YESTERDAY

Warmest: Alnmouth 2C (36F)
Coldest (day): Alnmouth 5C (41F)
Wettest: Tullach Bridge 1.73 ins
Sunniest: Orkney Islands 2.5 hrs
For 24hrs to 2pm Tuesday

EXTREMES

	Sea	Rain	Max	Min
Aberdeen	0.2	0.08	6	43
Anglesey	0	0.35	9	48
Ardara	1.8	0.06	5	41
Belfast	0	0.15	9	48
Birmingham	0.5	0.10	10	52
Bournemouth	0.7	0.11	10	50
Bristol	0.3	0.28	9	46
Buxton	0	0.09	6	43
Cardiff	0	0.25	9	50
Cardigan	3.0	0.01	8	46
Carmarthen	0.3	0.27	10	50
Castell	0	0.28	9	48
Falkenstein	3.3	0.01	9	48
Glasgow	0.6	0.11	9	48
Harwich	3.8	0.01	9	48
Hove	2.1	0.11	9	48
Isle of Wight	0	0.06	9	48
Jersey	2.1	0	10	50
London	0.5	0.19	7	45
London	0	0.08	10	50
Lewes	0.5	0.07	6	43
Liverpool	0.5	0.07	6	43
Littlehampton	2.3	0.09	9	48
Lowestoft	3.6	0	9	48
Manchester	0.1	0.03	7	45
Marazion	3.5	0.01	9	48
Newcastle	1.1	0.02	6	43
Newquay	0.2	0.11	10	52
Northwich	4.2	0.01	9	48
Oxford	0.7	0.20	8	46
Penryn	0	0.22	8	46
Portsmouth	0.9	0.01	7	45
Salisbury	0	0.04	7	45
Scarborough	0	0.04	7	45
Southport	0	0.04	7	45
Stoke Newington	0.5	0.06	7	45
Swansea	0.7	0.08	10	50
Tenby	0	0.30	11	52
Torquay	0	0.22	11	52
Walsby	0.1	0.18	10	50
Weymouth	0.1	0.18	10	50

COME RAIN OR SHINE...

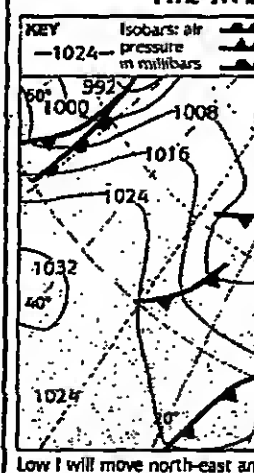
MANY PARTS of Britain are still facing the threat of flooding following renewed heavy rain overnight with the Environment Agency keeping in force almost 100 flood warnings on rivers in England and Wales. There are seven amber and 86 yellow warnings in place, mainly in the Midlands, Wales and the south-east, with the River Severn posing the greatest threat, mainly in Bewdley in Hereford and Worcester.

THE WORLD

EUROPE NOON TODAY



THE ATLANTIC NOON TODAY



THE WORLD YESTERDAY

	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Temp	Wind	Cloud
Abidjan	23	17	100	Chicago	10	100
Algiers	14	17	100	Colombo	23	100
Amman	14	17	100	Copenhagen	10	100
Ankara	14	17	100	Dublin	10	100
Antananarivo	14	17	100	Edinburgh	10	100
Ashgabat	14	17	100	Geneva	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Hamburg	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Helsinki	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Istanbul	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	London	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Madrid	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Moscow	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Nairobi	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Paris	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Rome	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Stockholm	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Toronto	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Warsaw	10	100
Asmara	14	17	100	Zurich	10	100

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Banbury, Oxfordshire Whately Hall	£120
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Cheltenham, Gloucestershire Queen's Hotel	£150
Chester, Cheshire The Blossoms Hotel	£116
Christchurch, Dorset The Avonmouth Hotel	£118
Dartmouth, Devon The Dart Marina	£126
Dorking, Surrey The White Horse	£136
Dovedale, Derbyshire The Peveril of the Peak	£108
Dunster, Somerset The Luttrell Arms	£100
Exeter, East Exeter The Southgate	£98
Farnham, Surrey The Bush Hotel	£110
Hereford, Hereford & Wore. The Green Dragon	£98
Hertingfordbury, Hertfordshire The White Horse	£118
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Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire Swan's Nest £118
Ullswater, Cumbria Leeming House £110
Winchester, Hampshire The Wyndham £118
Woodstock, Oxfordshire The Bear £170
Worcester, Worcestershire The Giffard £294

MIDWINTER ONLY

Grosvenor, Cumbria The Swan £90
Helmley, Yorkshire The Black Swan £120
Lavenham, Suffolk The Swan £128
Oxford, Oxfordshire The Randolph £174

WEEKEND ONLY

Amersham, Bucks. The Crown £124
Ascot, Berkshire The Berrystede £160
Canterbury, Kent The Chaucer Hotel £124
Coventry, Warwickshire The Brandon Hall £114
Romey, Hampshire The White Horse £108
Windsor, Berkshire The Castle Hotel £170

Terms and conditions: All bookings are subject to availability with a limited number of rooms available at these rates. Offers available until 1 March 1999. Prices are per person for 3 nights sharing a twin or double room. Sole occupancy supplements apply. All prices include VAT at 17.5%. Individual hotels cannot accept bookings for these offers. Valid for U.K. residents only. †These are Forte associated hotels and are not part of the Heritage Collection.

Football tycoon sues 'wasteful' son

SIR JACK HAYWARD, one of Britain's richest men, is suing his son over alleged financial irregularities at the football club on which he once admitted spending his children's inheritance. Lawyers acting for the owner of Wolverhampton Wanderers have filed papers relating to the movement of three sums of money totalling £237,400 while his son Jonathan was club chairman.

BY JOHN WILLCOCK
AND STEVE BOGGAN

The family feud is the latest manifestation of Sir Jack's passion for Wolves. Since 1990, when the multi-millionaire who is listed as Britain's 125th richest man bought the Midlands club for £2.1m, he has spent £40m on new stands and players in an attempt to fulfil his dream of winning the FA Cup

before he dies. Papers filed at the High Court show that Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club (1986) Ltd, Wolverhampton Wanderers Properties Ltd and WW (1990) Ltd are suing Jonathan Hayward, aged 31, James Nicholas Stones, a solicitor, and his firm, Wiggins and Co. Sir Jack is chairman and president of Wolves. Sir Jack made Jonathan, the younger of his two sons, chair-

man of the club shortly after he bought it, but relations between the two have cooled since the autumn of 1997 when Jonathan was demoted to deputy chairman. He resigned from the club at the end of the 1997-98 season. Sir Jack shocked television viewers when he rounded on his son and Mark McGhee, the former club manager, last year, shouting: "They think Golden Time - will go on forever. It's

blackmail. Money has been wasted." Jonathan refused to discuss the litigation yesterday at his farm in Tweed, Northumberland. When asked whether he was speaking terms with his father, he replied: "I don't want to make any comment at all."

The writ claims that three resolutions "purportedly passed" at board meetings in March 1997, May 1995 and August 1995, "approving the repayment to WW (1990) Ltd of (money), are of no legal effect."

It alleges that the repayments - of £100,000 in March 1997, £37,400 in May 1995 and £100,000 in August 1995 - were made "without legal authority". Further, Sir Jack's legal team argue that resolutions at three board meetings relating to the repayments "are of no legal effect".

They are demanding that Jonathan accounts for the amounts received and "for all benefits and profits derived therefrom" and they are seeking damages and compensation for "breaches of fiduciary duty". Jonathan Hayward and James Stones were directors of the club at the time the movements of money were authorised and it is understood they are to contest Sir Jack's claims. But a full explanation in court is not expected for several months.



Sir Jack Hayward and his son Jonathan, whom he is suing over financial irregularities

'Union Jack', the patriot who spent a fortune to make dreams come true

JACK HAYWARD's obsession with Wolverhampton Wanderers was kindled when, as a boy of seven, he would sneak for free into the ground just 600 yards from his family home.

Today, his outlay on the club stands at £42m and he flies from his mansion in the Bahamas to every home game.

He is not the type of football chairman who is more interested in the club's share price than its place in the league. His is a true passion, born of an ambition to see Wolves win the FA Cup and promotion to the Premiership before he dies.

But even to those who have witnessed his obsession, *The Independent's* revelation that, through the club, he is suing his son, Jonathan, 31, over alleged financial irregularities will come as a surprise - raising questions about the future of the club.

In spite of the enormous spending on the club ground, Molineux, and on players, Wolves have failed to make Sir Jack's dreams come true. His elder son, Richard, 46, remains on the Board following Jonathan's resignation last year.

Sir Jack is held in high affection by the Wolves fans who much regret that the team has

BY STEVE BOGGAN

not been able to repay his generosity with good performances on the pitch.

Mark McGhee, the former club manager sacked by Sir Jack, once said: "Sir Jack looks from the supporters' perspective. He's entitled to say: 'Hey, I've put £40m into this. This is what I believe.'"

"I can't afford to be sentimental but I know what Utopia would be for this club - Steve Bull (Wolves' best-known striker) scoring the winning goal at Wembley, climbing the steps

and handing the Cup to Sir Jack."

It is a dream on which Sir Jack will spare no expense - at times to the chagrin of his family. Once, when his daughter, Sue, expressed concern over the £800,000 purchase of a player, he chuckled and said: "She can see her inheritance going down the drain."

Any kind of footballing success would now be a crowning achievement for a man who made £175m by capitalising on the growing popularity of the Bahamas and helping it grow as a shipping centre and an off-



The Bahamas, home to 'Union Jack Hayward'

shore tax haven - he has even bought the club's holding company there.

Sir Jack, who was knighted in 1986, has been chairman of the Grand Bahama Development Company Ltd and Freeport Commercial and Industrial Ltd since 1976. He also has interests in electrical and water utilities. He flew with the RAF and is a life vice-president of the Maritime Trust.

Sir Jack lives in an opulent house in Freeport, Grand Bahama Island, with his wife, Jean, and also has homes in Surrey and Inverness. His Scottish place - a 14,000-acre estate - came with the title of the Laird of Dunmaglass.

In spite of his decision to reside on Grand Bahama - for business as well as tax reasons - he likes to portray himself as a great patriot, hence his nickname "Union Jack Hayward". His love of Britain extends to promoting the use of red phone boxes, buses and post boxes on the island.

In *Who's Who*, he lists his recreations as: "Promoting British endeavours, mainly in sport; watching cricket; amateur dramatics; preserving the British landscape, keeping all things bright, beautiful and

is not hard to make out what she says to her," Mr Gabb told the court. "There was no need to beat it just because it would not go into its cage. Mrs Cawley can be heard caustically saying 'You can bloody cry.'" Two days later, she was filmed viciously kicking the small chimp.

There were gasps from the public gallery as the video was played in the courtroom. Mr Gills was shown beating elephants with a broom and smashing a chicken's head against the wall of a barn.

He was also seen striking an elephant 12 times with a large metal rod around its legs and backs and shouting: "You'll never learn."

The court heard that the videos were made during a series of misfortunes for the family. Last year, Ms Chipperfield's son, Richard, was savaged by a tiger in Florida and Nigel Wesson, an employee, had his arm bitten off at the training centre in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire.

The case continues.

Mary Chipperfield 'beat young chimpanzee until it screamed'

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

MARY CHIPPERFIELD, one of the best-known circus animal trainers in the world, beat a baby chimpanzee until it screamed in pain, a court was told yesterday.

Ms Chipperfield, who described herself as the chimp's "mother", also made a sick elephant perform pirouettes and hit a camel on its stomach with a walking stick.

Magistrates at Andover in Hampshire were told that Ms Chipperfield who, with her husband, Richard Cawley, faces cruelty to animals charges, did not believe the beatings had harmed the animals and did not consider them to be gratuitous. Charles Gabb, for the prosecution, outlined a catalogue of neglect allegedly carried out by the couple and one of their employees, Stephen Gills, aged 65.

Ms Chipperfield, 61, has denied 21 charges under the 1911 Protection of Animals Act. Her 64-year-old husband, the former manager of Longleat Safari Park, pleaded not guilty to seven charges between October 1997 and January 1998.



Mary Chipperfield allegedly goading a camel with a stick in a video shot by the charity Animal Defenders

The couple face a maximum of six months in jail or a £5,000 fine. Video evidence, which was secretly obtained by two members of the charity Animal Defenders, showed an elephant being beaten with a spade and an iron bar and the camel, Jasmine, being hit with the wooden walking stick.

Ms Chipperfield, who gave her name in court as Mrs Cawley, allegedly carried out the attacks on Trudi the baby chimpanzee.

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The case continues.

The case continues.



Molineux, home to Wolverhampton Wanderers football club, where £40m has been spent on new stands and players

British." Following heart surgery two years ago, he blamed his problems on a love of British food. "The cholesterol has built up over the years, I'm afraid," he said. "I'm very fond of fish and chips and big, marbled steaks with all the fat on."

His family members will be

concerned over the effect of the row on his health. Those who know him said that Jonathan would go out of his way to be good to his father, to the point of being overly deferential. Following his departure from the club, he prefers to spend time at his farm in Northumberland and is playing no further part

in Sir Jack's dream. A business associate said: "They had a good relationship but it has been badly affected by all this business - particularly Jonathan's decision to leave... I don't know how they will survive this, but one wonders what will happen to the club after Sir Jack passes away."

In the meantime, Sir Jack's dream is as strong and obsessive as ever and his haste to achieve it grows ever more urgent.

"I've not got much time to go," he said last year. "My ambition is to lift the FA Cup. Soon I won't be strong enough to hold the bloody thing."

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Move to thwart abattoir strike

BY BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

THE GOVERNMENT is secretly attempting to undermine a threatened strike by abattoir inspectors which would have an immediate impact on the supply of fresh meat.

Nearly 1,000 officials are thought to have voted 'yes' in a ballot, the result of which will be announced today. They are in the Union public-services union, one of the Labour's biggest financial backers.

The agency employing the inspectors has sent out a memo to council chief executives urging them to divert environmental health experts to abattoirs if there is a strike. The letter, signed by Johnston McNeill, chief executive of the Meat Hygiene Service, emphasised that slaughterhouses must not produce meat for human consumption where there is inadequate cover by agency staff.

Unison is planning one, two and three-day stoppages, which would have a substantial and immediate effect on the amount of fresh meat on supermarket shelves. Unison is urging its members in environmental health departments at councils to ignore the strike-breaking plea from the Government. Some 75 per cent of the inspectors have already voted to reject a 4-per-cent pay offer and registered their readiness to take industrial action.

The stoppages would come at a particularly embarrassing time for ministers. European Commission experts are making spot-checks on abattoirs to police the lifting of the ban on British beef in Europe.

Management has imposed the pay increase on staff, who are insisting on a 5-per-cent rise. Their anger is partly fuelled by the alleged violence and intimidation inflicted on them by slaughterhouse employees keen to keep production going.



Francesca Zambello (left), the sought-after producer, and John Tomlinson (right) playing Boris Godunov in her English National Opera production

Laurie Lewis

Royal Opera woos feisty New Yorker to help revive fortunes

AMERICAN OPERA producer Francesca Zambello is being targeted by the Royal Opera House to be its new artistic director. The feisty 41-year-old New Yorker has been approached by the ROH management to work alongside its new executive director Michael Kaiser, also an American, to turn round the fortunes of the troubled institution.

If Ms Zambello agrees to come to the ROH it will be the first time that a British national arts company has been run by

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

two Americans, an indication of the change of ethos and approach that chairman of the ROH, Sir Colin Southgate, wants to instigate.

Mr Kaiser, known in the US as "the turnaround king" has been at the ROH for three months and has already set in motion various changes, including expanding the base of corporate and individual support, planning a re-opening

festival for the opera house and drawing up a new ticket-pricing structure with much lower prices at weekends.

Although Sir Colin said last year that an artistic director would lead the managerial structure, Mr Kaiser has made it clear that he will serve as a joint number one but not as a number two. One early choice for the post of artistic director, Sarah Billingham of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, refused to take up the position under that condition.

But it is understood that Ms Zambello is happy with the arrangement and would not want to extend her remit from the artistic side, nor necessarily to be seen as the most senior figure at the ROH.

Insiders say a Zambello/Kaiser ticket could proceed without any hickering.

Her work is already well known to British opera and theatre-goers. Her flamboyant production for The Royal Opera of *The Bartered Bride* is currently on at the Sadler's Wells

and she recently put Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* on stage at the London Coliseum for ENO, rehearsing both productions at the same time.

She also directed the revival of the play *Lady in the Dark* at the National Theatre last year. She has a reputation for handling large casts well and inspiring loyalty.

Ms Zambello, who speaks French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian, said in a recent interview: "I am a nurturer. Some directors are conceptu-

alists, some authoritarians, some work through total democracy and discovery.

"What I try to do is ensure that everyone involved makes a personal investment and is valued for it."

Ms Zambello could expect to be paid the same salary as Mr Kaiser. He is understood to be earning £115,000 a year with the Royal Opera House.

A Royal Opera House spokeswoman would only comment: "We are searching very actively for an artistic director."

Editor loses job after expose

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor
AND GARY FINN

THE EDITOR of the *Express* on Sunday that authorised a controversial article about the private life of the former Trade Secretary Peter Mandelson, during a trip to Brazil, has lost her job.

Amanda Platell, executive editor of the *Express* on Sunday, approved a story headlined "Brazilian student who is Mandelson's close friend" in November. The story prompted the former cabinet minister to contact Ms Platell's boss, *Express* editor Rosie Boycott, who is also a friend of Mr Mandelson.

The four most senior executives on the title could all depart because of the affair.

In response to the bloodletting at the newspaper, Conservative MP Julie Kirkbride tabled an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons today outlining opposition to what she calls Mr Mandelson's "unacceptable pressure on the editors of the *Express* on Sunday to water down the story."

The motion also refers to other alleged behind-the-scenes manipulation by Mr Mandelson in which a senior journalist for *The Sun* was sacked after making comments about the Hartlepool MP on television.

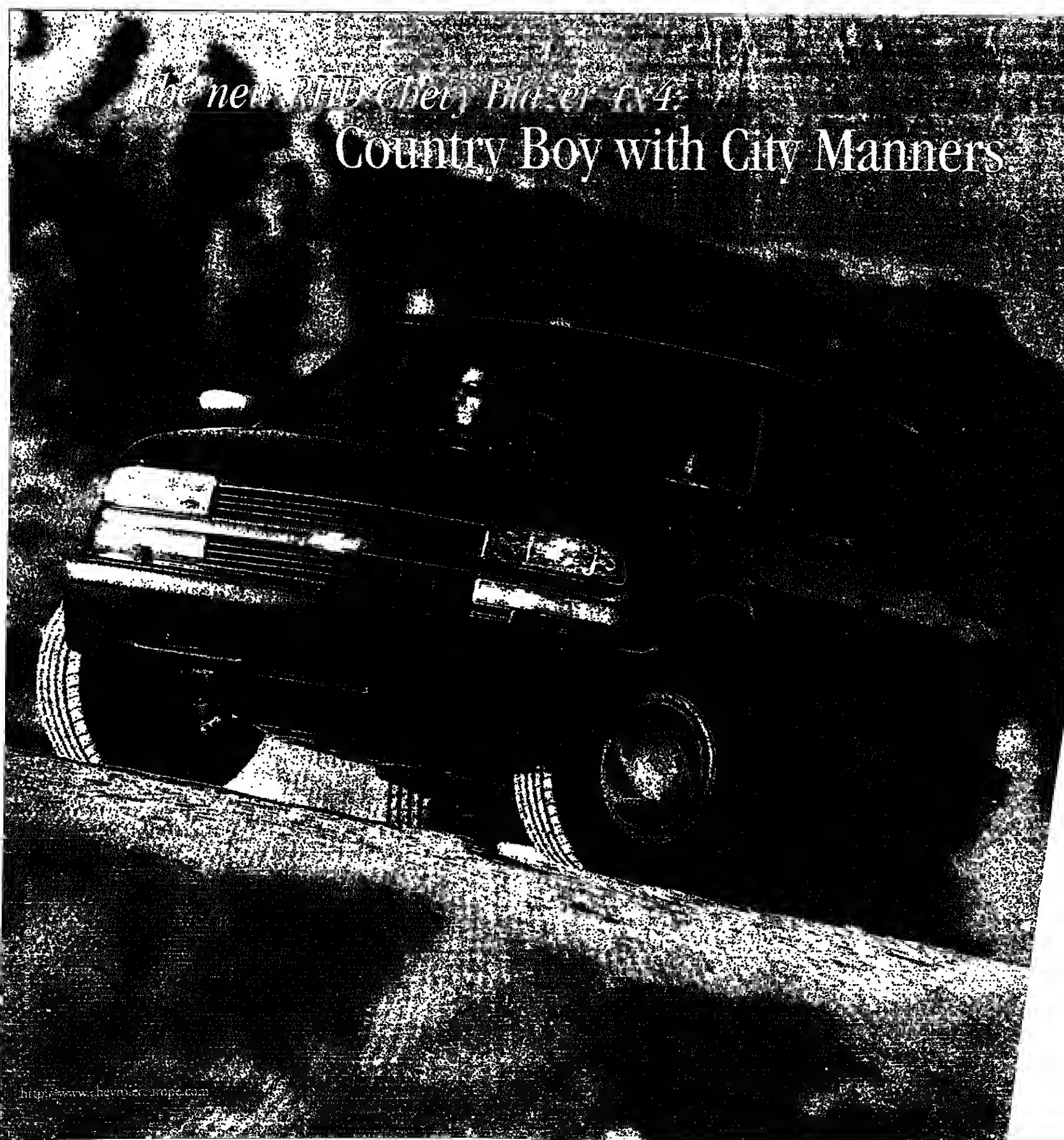
The *Express* denied yesterday that the article about Mandelson's friend, Reinaldo Avila da Silva, was connected to changes in the Sunday title.

However, senior sources on the title confirmed that relations between Ms Boycott and Ms Platell had been strained.

"Rosie and the paper gave assurances to the Press Complaints Commission that an interview with and photographs of Reinaldo had been given freely. That proved to be incorrect. That was not good journalism," said a senior *Express* executive.

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CHEVROLET

Ditch two
and be b

Hollywood
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Editor loses job after expose

BY PAUL MCCANN
Media Editor
AND GARY FINN

THE EDITOR of the Express on Sunday that authorised a controversial article about the private life of the former Prime Minister, Peter Mandelson, during a trip to Brazil, has lost his job.

James Piatelli, executive editor of the Express on Sunday, approved a story headlined "Blair's secret life" which was written by the newspaper's chief political correspondent, Peter Mandelson. The story prompted a furious reaction from Blair's cabinet ministers and led to the resignation of Piatelli's boss, Express editor Rosemary Wootton, who was a friend of Mr Mandelson.

The four most senior executives of the Express on Sunday have been criticised for their role in the affair. Piatelli, who was in charge of the newspaper's editorial content, was accused of authorising the article. The Express on Sunday's managing director, John Birt, was also criticised for his role in the affair. The Express on Sunday's chief executive, Peter Mandelson, was also criticised for his role in the affair.

I don't blame people for shunning the local comprehensive, says Blair

THE PRIME Minister yesterday provoked teachers' fury when he attacked inner-city schools and said he understood why some parents refused to send their children to the local comprehensive.

In a clear reference to his own decision to send his children six miles across London to high-performing comprehensives, he said some inner-city schools were so bad that he did not blame parents for "making other arrangements".

Heads said that was encouragement to parents to desert the state sector for private schools and teachers accused him of "self-justification".

The Blairs' decision to send their two sons, Euan and Nicholas, to the London Oratory, a Catholic grand-maintained school, in west London, caused controversy when it was revealed four years ago. Last week, Downing Street announced that their daughter, Kathryn, will attend the Sacred Heart High School all girls' Catholic comprehensive, near the Oratory, from September.

Yesterday Mr Blair said in an interview with BBC radio: "We simply have to bring about a different type of culture in the way we look at education where we don't have the levels of failure that we have in the present system."

"When I look at some of the inner-city schooling, it is no

BY JUDITH JUDG
Education Editor

wonder parents feel they have to move out or to make other arrangements for their children. Every single child that is denied a proper education is a child that is not given a proper start in life."

Later Mr Blair continued his attack on bad schools when he joined David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education, at a conference of head teachers on the Government's Green Paper on the future of the teaching profession.

He acknowledged that pupils' social background influenced schools' performance but added: "We all know schools in exactly the same social position which differ widely in their performance."

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "We will never solve the problem of inner-city schools by encouraging parents to vote with their feet and desert inner-city schools for the private sector or comprehensives in more favoured areas."

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said: "There is an element of self-justification in Mr Blair's words. He doesn't understand the varied and complex difficulties external to the school faced by teachers in the inner cities."

"His persistent attacks on

teachers are aimed at convincing the public that teachers are not as deserving as nurses."

"Instead, he insists on destabilising existing teachers and discouraging young people from entering the profession, putting children's education in jeopardy."

Margaret Tulloch, of the parents' pressure group the Campaign for State Education, said: "He does not speak for all middle-class inner-city parents. Some are very happy with inner-city schools."

The Prime Minister warned heads at the conference in Chelmsford, Essex: "I know from my own experience in my constituency and with my own children that there is insufficient understanding in this country of the fundamental importance of getting the education system right. If we have a second-class education system we will have a second-class country."

The Green Paper proposes that good teachers and schools should get more money and that all teachers should be appraised annually.

Mr Blair told the heads: "The public are prepared for us to make an investment in education but they want higher standards in return."

Challenged by his audience about the divisive effect of performance-related pay, he argued that the Government did not want to create divisions but had to face the real-



Tony Blair and David Blunkett at Moulsham School, Chelmsford, yesterday where they were addressing head teachers. Andrew Buurman

ity that there were some good teachers and some not so good teachers.

Britain educated the top 20 per cent of children very well and the top 5 per cent extremely well. Further down,

there were large numbers of children not getting the education they deserved.

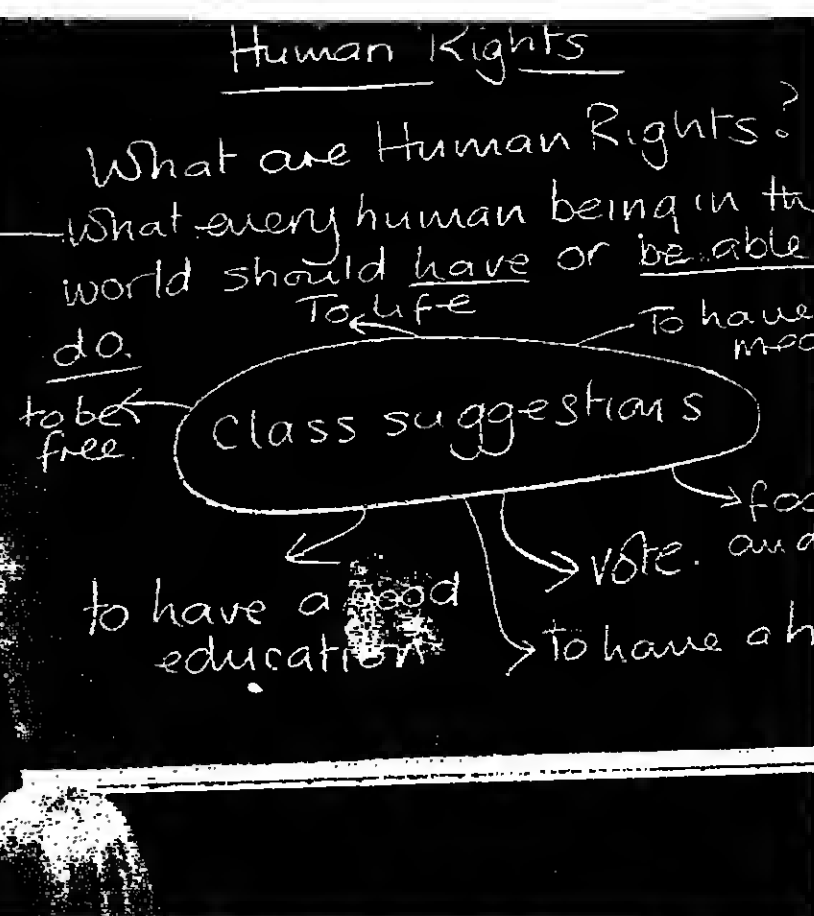
Heads welcomed the priority and commitment given to schools but had reservations about the proposals. Kevin

Arnell, of Boswells comprehensive school in Chelmsford, said: "They run the risk of putting staff against staff. A terrifying number of schools have improved in this country without using performance-

related pay." The proportion of pupils at his own school getting five good grades at GCSE had nearly doubled during the last six years.

Alan Wright, head of St James' primary school in Har-

low, questioned whether there were enough staff in smaller schools to cope with the new appraisal arrangements, particularly when so many other government initiatives were in progress.



New Labour pledges loyalty to working-class roots

TONY BLAIR has hit back angrily at criticism that Labour is now a "middle-class party" which has turned its back on its traditional supporters.

The Prime Minister said: "It suits our critics, inside and outside our ranks, to suggest New Labour is somehow a recent invention of a metropolitan-based elite, foisted on an unwilling party... It is just not true."

Mr Blair angered Labour MPs last week by saying that

BY ANDREW GRICE
AND JOHN KENTON

Britain's old establishment was being replaced by a new meritocratic middle class, including millions who traditionally might see themselves as working class. The MPs saw this as a further sign that Labour was moving away from its working-class foundations.

"New Labour has its roots solidly in the traditional Labour

area of the North-east I am lucky enough to represent," said Mr Blair, MP for Sedgefield. "It derives from an acceptance that we had lost touch with the needs and ambitions of the people we sought to represent... While retaining our traditional values, our party had to modernise to modernise our country."

Mr Blair's counter-attack came in the foreword to a pamphlet, *The Roots of New*

Labour, charting the growth of the Sedgefield Labour Party. Membership rose from 600 in 1983, when Mr Blair became its candidate, to 2,000 after long-winded meetings were replaced by social events and barbecues.

Phil Wilson, who was membership officer of the Sedgefield party and now works at Labour's Millbank headquarters in London, said in his pamphlet: "New Labour is not a product of think-tanks and

focus groups. Neither is it something foreign which has been grafted on to the Labour Party. The roots of New Labour can be found in traditional hard-working communities."

"In Sedgefield, we had to appeal to our potential supporters in the private estates, if we were to help our traditional supporters living in council estates... It was the genesis of New Labour and came from experiencing the sharp end of

Thatcherism. It did not mean selling out on our principles and values."

However, Mr Wilson admitted Labour had "a problem" after a slight drop in membership during the past year, from 405,238 to 391,771.

He acknowledged that maintaining a united party might be the most difficult of Labour's objectives. There needed to be a "settled environment" in which the party and the Gov-

ernment worked together. Labour must be more than "an organisational structure which delivers elections"; it must be "a living, breathing entity".

"If the Labour Party is to succeed during the next century, modernisation will not end with Tony Blair. It must maintain its momentum. He realises that leaders come and go but the Labour Party goes on," said Mr Wilson.

Mr Blair agreed that the de-

finition of an active Labour member - someone who attends meetings - is wrong. Community work, such as running a youth club or being a school governor, "is just as valuable to the party," said Mr Wilson. Rejecting allegations that Mr Blair is a "coolhead freak," Mr Wilson insisted the party's new policy-making process was more open and democratic.

Blair a threat to Britain? Anne McElvoy, *Review*, page 3

Ditch twin-set and pearls and be brassy says Hague

BY COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

WILLIAM HAGUE last night broke the mould of the Major years by calling on the Tory Party to embrace "brassy" life in today's Britain of *Eastenders*, MTV, and urban culture.

The Conservative party leader sought to break away from the past, and to modernise the image of the Tory Party by challenging Tony Blair's belief in the "Third Way" with a competing vision of "the British Way".

Where his predecessor had conjured up images of a past Britain, of sleepy village, polite manners, and friendly vicars, Mr Hague tried to jolt the Tories into the present of big industrial cities, housing estates - "the Britain which watches MTV and *Changing Rooms*, and which is fascinated by Ricky and Bianca's ups and downs".



The Tory vision as told by John Major 22-4-93: "Fifty years from now, Britain will still be the country of long shadows on country grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and pools fillers and as George Orwell said, 'old maids cycling to Holy Communion through the morning mist'."



The Tory vision told by William Hague 19-1-99: "Conservatives must embrace Britain as it is today and will be tomorrow. Not just the sleepy villages, polite manners, friendly vicars and novels of Scott and Austen. But also the Britain of industrial cities and housing estates..."

Describing the shift as a "huge cultural change for the Conservative Party", he told an audience in London that they had to focus on the Britain where more people went on holiday to Florida than Butlins, "urban, ambitious, sporty, fashion-conscious, multi-ethnic, brassy, self-confident and international".

Clearly anxious to rid the

Tories of the twin-set and pearls image, Mr Hague - once pilloried for wearing a baseball cap with his name on it - said it was a multi-ethnic Britain where hundreds of thousands go to the Notting Hill Carnival.

"It is my profoundest belief that if the Conservative Party is not in touch with the identity and values of the British people then it cannot be

authentically Conservative." He warned: "We must never be the nostalgia party. We must do more than grudgingly accept Britain here and now; we must celebrate it."

The Conservatives must "shed the image that we are nothing more than a party obsessed with economics, and take our rightful place as the champion of the British Way".

Hollywood is providing the lines but not the substance

WARREN BEATTY's new satirical comedy about American political life, *Bulworth*, begins with a scene in which a senator listens to his campaign commercials, all of which begin with the same vacuous invocation of moment. "We stand at the doorstep of a new millennium," he declares, before identifying the native virtues of the American people: instinctively hostile to welfare handouts, naturally enterprising and self-reliant.

In his speech yesterday at the Centre for Policy Studies, William Hague had tinkered a little with the opening for local tastes - "I want to talk to you about Britain," he said, "Britain, now at the cusp of a new millennium" - but the speech that followed had more than a few unadorned *Bul-*

worth moments - passages in which sweeping, emotional abstractions about the national character were enlisted for a particular political end.

As politics, the speech was straightforward. As social commentary, however, it was at times positively surreal - a strange blend of *National Geographic* prose ("We are reserved, polite, private") and glaring internal contradictions.

Early in the speech Mr Hague, who recently stayed at a hotel in Essex which flew the flag of St George, talked approvingly of how "a distinct English consciousness" is emerging - for which he calls in evidence not only football fans but Julian Barnes' recent novel *England, England*

(which would have provided him with a far more acidic roster of national characteristics had he troubled to open it).

But just a little later he was talking darkly about "the first stirrings of the sleeping dragon of English nationalism".

Perhaps that Essex hotel turned out not to be so innocently patriotic - a cover for the Sons of Albion Defence League rather than AB&B. And by the end of Mr Hague's address, that "reserved, polite, private" people have strangely altered too - now they are a brassy, noisy crowd, snogging policemen at the Notting Hill carnival, holidaying in Florida and turning first to the sports pages of their newspapers.

Where does he get all this from? Another Hollywood satire might offer an answer. In

Being There, Peter Sellers played a simpleton who rises to the presidency of the US because his naive remarks about gardening are interpreted as metaphorical pronouncements.

Mr Hague clinches the parallel when he supplies the evidence for his speculations. "I recently watched *The Godfather* again," he says. "I was struck by how many cousins Michael Corleone has, and how many of them join the family business." That's the Italians for you then, but us? "In Britain families tend to be much smaller. One of our most popular sitcoms is actually called *Two Point Four Children*," he continues sagely. An even more popular comedy is *Keeping Up Appearances*, but maybe Mr Hague thought that would be a little too close to home.

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Dentists earning £200,000 on NHS

THERE HAS been a boom in the number of dentists boosting their incomes from the NHS to six-figure sums by treating scores of patients every day.

Official figures show almost 500 dentists earned more than £200,000 from the NHS between 1997 and 1998 compared with 20 between 1990 and 1991. Their earnings are more than twice the average NHS income for dentists, before deductions for expenses.

The boom in high-earners is causing alarm in the wake of the case of Melvyn Megitt, the dentist accused of providing unnecessary treatment to children and adults in Manchester which is being heard by the General Dental Council. Mr Megitt is alleged to have earned over £500,000 from the NHS in one year and is said to have treated up to 150 patients a day.

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

Dentists have complained for years that NHS fees are too low to allow them to earn a reasonable living from the NHS. Average earnings from the NHS are just over £100,000 of which 55 per cent goes on the expenses of running the practice, leaving an average income of £46,000.

Many dentists have turned to private work in the last ten years to boost their NHS earnings but some have opted to increase their NHS work by working longer hours or hiring assistants from abroad.

The British Dental Association said the increase in the number of these assistants - about 1,000 are thought to be working in the UK - reflected the shortage of British dentists. Most come from South Africa

and are forced to take jobs as assistants, working under supervision, because they do not have the equivalent training to qualified British dentists.

The Patients Association said the boom in high earnings and the growth in the hiring of assistants was worrying. Roger Goss, a spokesman, said: "Perhaps this is something the health department ought to investigate. It raises the question of whether all the work being done is being done by fully qualified people."

Linda Wallace, the head of general practice at the BDA, said: "It is a way of boosting NHS earnings provided you have got a room to put the assistants in. If you have the space, expanding the practice may mean you can save on costs."

Michael Norton, a dental adviser to the Isle of Wight health

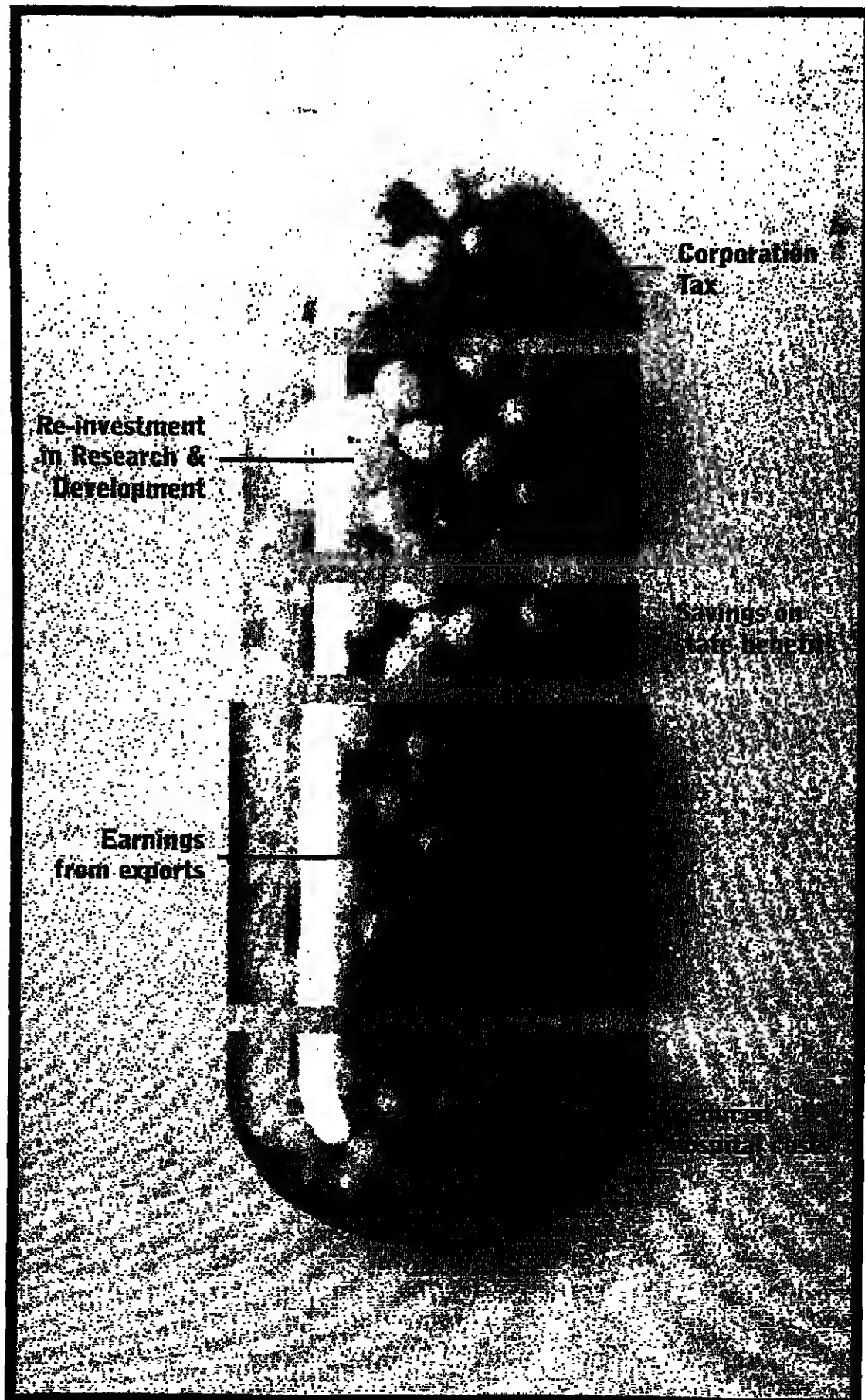
authority, said: "There is always a suspicion if someone is earning a large amount of money from the NHS that their work is being hurried or rushed and may be of a poor standard. Some work very long hours and some deal with the sorts of treatments that incur higher fees such as orthodontics or they hire assistants. But the Dental Practice Board targets practitioners with high earnings for special scrutiny because of this concern."

Mr Megitt had no assistant but managed to cope by working long hours. The BDA said yesterday that high-earning dentists working single-handedly were "highly unusual". It added: "The vast majority of the country's 19,000 NHS dentists are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the mounting costs of running their practices."



The Rev Baroness Richardson, the Most Rev George Carey, Cardinal Basil Hume and Rowena Loverance, join forces for a united declaration on the timing of the millennium celebrations Tom Craig

Sickness Benefit.



This year, the National Health Service will spend £6 billion on medicines - about 25 pence per person per day.

In return, the pharmaceutical industry will re-invest some 20% of its annual turnover in the search for new and improved medicines.

This investment will benefit the National Health Service by helping to reduce hospital admissions and saving over £10 billion a year on patient care.

The value of medicines goes far beyond supporting the NHS. The pharmaceutical industry provides employment for more than 300,000 people and exports over £5 billion of medicines a year, producing one of the country's largest trade surpluses of £2 billion.

Over the past five years pharmaceutical companies have committed over £2 billion in capital investment, and more is planned.

The benefit of the industry is also felt within the Treasury as pharmaceutical companies in Britain pay hundreds of millions of pounds in Corporation Tax each year.

But perhaps the industry is least known for its investment in education, funding half of all post-graduate training for GPs and supporting universities to the tune of £100 million a year.

If all this good work is not encouraged, it wouldn't just be the industry that would fall sick. It would be the country.



The Association of the
British Pharmaceutical Industry
12 Whitehall London SW1A 2DY

TAKE CARE OF AN INDUSTRY THAT TAKES CARE OF BRITAIN

Churches call early start to millennium

YOU MAY be forgiven for thinking that the new millennium begins at midnight on 31 December 1999. Not so, according to church leaders, who announced on Tuesday that the celebrations should kick off on Christmas Eve 1999.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, and the head of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales, Cardinal Basil Hume, signed a statement stressing that the year marking the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus's birth will begin earlier.

"For hundreds of millions of Christians throughout the world... the celebrations to mark the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ will begin on Christmas Eve 1999," the statement reads.

Until now, Churches Together in England (CTE), the umbrella body co-ordinating the churches' millennial celebrations, have concentrated on their so-called "Millennium Moment". But the CTE presidents, which include Dr Carey and Cardinal Hume, have now suggested that just before midnight on New Year's Eve, people should put down their glasses, light a candle and read a "resolution" which makes no reference to God or Jesus.

The resolution, which is in the form of a prayer, comes with a candle and a candleholder and will carry a label which reads: "This is a gift from the

BY CLARE GARNER

local churches to mark the 2,000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ." The proposal has been greeted with considerable scepticism from Christians and non-churchgoers alike, who say they will be focusing on Christmas and drinking respectively.

Yesterday's statement was an attempt to quash criticisms of the "Millennium Moment" and continues: "It is not a substitute for Christian worship, nor is it exclusively Christian. Rather, what it does is to underline the importance of spiritual and common values in an increasingly secular age and we are delighted that the Government and other political, and faith leaders have responded so positively to it."

The other two presidents of CTE, the Moderator of the Free Churches' Council, the Rev Baroness Richardson, and Rowena Loverance, of the Religious Society of Friends, also signed the statement, the emphasis of which follows the line already taken by the Pope.

Last November Pope John Paul II issued a papal bull in which he also decreed that the year 2000 will begin on Christmas Eve 1999. The beginning of the "Jubilee" year will be marked by the opening of the holy door in Rome, and run until the Feast of the Epiphany on 6 January 2001, he said.

IN BRIEF

Teenagers held over youth's death

DETECTIVES ARRESTED four teenagers yesterday in connection with the murder of a youth in August 1997, Scotland Yard said. Jamie Robe, 17, died in south east London after being beaten with baseball bats and pool cues. A spokeswoman said the four, aged 15, 17, 18 and 19 - are in custody at police stations in south London.

Prison guards may strike again

PRISON OFFICERS' leaders last night refused to rule out further industrial action, despite a High Court injunction served on their union, after a strike over a 2.7 per cent pay rise. The Prison Service obtained the injunction after yesterday's hour-long stoppage. Industrial action by officers is outlawed under the 1994 Criminal Justice Act.

Missing cousins found in London

A TEENAGE girl and her 18-month-old cousin who had been missing since Sunday have been found safe and well, Scotland Yard said yesterday. Sacha Williamson, 17, and Kamal Mitchell were found "at an address in south east London after a tip-off", a Yard spokeswoman said.

Green group name 'wrongly used'

FRIENDS OF the Earth is claiming a large furniture company selling mahogany beds has been using its name to encourage customers to buy them. The London-based Wrought Iron Bed Factory denies the claims.

Golf prodigy hits two holes in one

AN 11-YEAR-OLD golfer stunned fellow players when he hit two consecutive holes in one. Greg Peters, of Armitage in Staffordshire, achieved the feat on the sixth and seventh holes of a Lichfield golf club on 22 January.

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Butlin with

BUTLIN'S HAS made court settlements to guests who said they were ejected from their holiday security guards. The claimants said that guests were ejected from Butlin's camp at Pwllheli, Wales, by staff who refused to let them in. Guests said guards had shouted: "Out! All Dead Out!" Butlin's expelled the claimants after a disturbance in the camp's nightclubs on Year's Eve 1997 prompted complaints from other makers. But yesterday the company apologised to claimants, accepting it had done nothing wrong and each an undisclosed

Medics say Yemen kidnap couple 'in good health'



Eddie and Mary Rosser were working for a Dutch medical aid agency in Yemen when they were kidnapped with four others

A BRITISH couple taken hostage in Yemen were yesterday said to be in good health after their kidnappers allowed them to be visited by hospital staff.

Eddie Rosser and his wife Mary, both aged in their 60s, were seen by staff from a hospital in Sadaa, north of the Yemeni capital, Sanaa. A Dutch family, including two young children, who were kidnapped at the same time, were also seen and said to be well.

Yesterday a Foreign Office spokesman said: "We are in touch with the Yemeni authorities, who are in contact with the kidnappers, and they have told us they are hoping for a release soon."

The spokesman added that the British government had obtained an assurance from the Yemeni authorities that they would not use force to free the six - a tactic that would be lethal when security forces attempted to rescue 16 Western tourists seized shortly after Christmas. Four of the tourists - including three Britons - died in the subsequent shoot-out.

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

Mr Rosser and his wife were kidnapped on Sunday as they and their Dutch colleagues were travelling in three cars on a road near Hawf in the Imran province, 87 miles north of Sanaa.

The couple, from Lechlade in Gloucestershire, who have a son and daughter, were working for the medical aid organisation Worldwide Services of the Netherlands, and were halfway through a six-month contract.

The six hostages, including the Dutch couple's two children - boys aged six and seven - were ambushed on the main highway as they drove through a mountainous area in northern Yemen, known locally as "kidnap corridor".

It is understood that the kidnappers are using the Westerners to try to secure the release of a colleague who is in jail. They are not thought to be linked to the group that seized the tourists last month.

Sharon Chase, who runs a newsagent in Lechlade, said Mr and Mrs Rosser were a

quiet couple. She said: "I was astounded when I heard they had been taken hostage - they really are an average, good-natured couple."

Meanwhile, it was announced last night that representatives of Britain's Muslim community will meet Foreign Office ministers tonight to discuss the five Britons detained in Yemen on terrorism charges.

A delegation from the Muslim Council of Britain will meet Derek Fatchett and Baroness Symons at the Foreign Office in London.

Mohsin Ghalain, 18, from London, Ghulam Hussein, 25, from Luton, and Shahid Butt, 33, Malik Nasser Harhra, 26, Samad Ahmed, 21, all from Birmingham, were arrested on 24 December on suspicion of links with Islamic extremists.

The men were charged last week with associating with armed groups, forming a plan to commit murder and destruction, and possessing weapons, in connection with the kidnapping of the Westerners.

Law lords told of Pinochet atrocities

GRUESOME DETAILS of the murders and torture methods allegedly used during the 17-year reign of the former Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet were outlined in London by the Spanish government yesterday.

The allegations included hostage-taking, electrocution, rape, forced cannibalism and incest. They emerged on the second day of the hearing by seven law lords that will determine whether the 83-year-old general has immunity from arrest and potential extradition to Spain.

Alun Jones QC, for the Spanish government, told the law lords that international conventions prohibiting human rights violations were based firmly on the notion of individual responsibility. "It must be that no matter who you are, whether a head of state, a government official or a public official, you have individual, personal responsibility in respect of a category of crimes recognised internationally as particularly odious, such as genocide, torture, and taking hostages," he said.

"Somewhere a line has to be drawn between actions which are the functions of a head of state, and those which are not." Mr Jones told the law lords only a limited number of a head of state's functions - state visits, signing treaties, and the sending and receiving of diplomats - were regarded as attracting immunity under international law. If countries chose to give their head of state additional powers, then those were not recognised as meriting any kind of immunity.

The chairman of the law lords' panel, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, indicated that the court would seek a certificate

BY CATHY COMERFORD

from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to make clear when the UK recognised General Pinochet as head of state.

The panel considered whether to ask for a certificate overnight. Lord Browne-Wilkinson said: "We thought it desirable to have the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's view if they are able to give it. It may or may not be vital, but it would be helpful."

The law lords were earlier told that some of the general's 4,000 alleged victims were tortured for years. Rape and buggery, sometimes of children, not only extracted useful information from victims but also terrified potential opponents, it was claimed.

In October 1976, when he was the commander in chief of the Chilean army, General Pinochet allegedly tortured Jose Marcelino Gonzalez Malpu by applying electric current to his genitals, shoulders and ankles and pretending to shoot in front of him his mother, who was captured and stripped naked.

Another victim, Pedro Hugo Arellano Carvajal, was allegedly forced to play Russian roulette. A priest, Miguel Woodward, was allegedly given electric shocks. His arms were broken with a hammer and he was beaten and left to die.

General Pinochet's supporters issued a statement yesterday claiming he had saved Chile from a Marxist regime and blamed "left-wing propaganda" for "distorting history". Robin Harris, a senior aide to Baroness Thatcher, published a pamphlet claiming the general has been the victim of "a politically inspired kidnap".

Butlin's settles with deaf guests

BUTLIN'S HAS made out-of-court settlements to nine deaf guests who said they were evicted from their chalets and thrown out of a holiday camp by security guards.

The claimants alleged 58 deaf guests were ejected from Butlin's camp at Pwllheli, North Wales, by staff who pulled out fuses and cut off heat and water. Guests said security guards had shouted: "Out! Out! Out! All Deaf Out!"

Butlin's expelled the guests after a disturbance in one of the camp's nightclubs on New Year's Eve 1997 prompted complaints from other holiday-makers. But yesterday the company apologised to the nine claimants, accepting they had done nothing wrong and paying each an undisclosed sum.

BY IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

Carl Miller, one of the successful deaf claimants, said the nine were delighted by the outcome. "For a holiday company which advertises that it is so disability-friendly, their lack of deaf awareness and disgraceful attitude is totally appalling."

Tony Marshall, Butlin's managing director, said: "Our actions were taken with ... the safety and security of our other guests in mind. However, we acknowledge Mr Miller and his party were not involved in the incidents at the centre and apologise for any distress that may have been caused. We are particularly saddened by these events, as Butlin's welcomes people with special needs."

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MPs find the awkward gap between outrage and reality

SOME MPS have more authority than others when asking questions, either conferred by some demographic curiosity of their constituency (Simon Hughes' Private Notice Question on Sierra Leone was received yesterday by the Foreign Secretary as he represents large numbers of Sierra Leoneans) or earned through past experience.

When the Balkans come up, for example, Martin Bell will usually be heard. On Monday, Paddy Ashdown was actually halfway down the steps in a crouching prelude to leaving the chamber when the Speaker called Mr Bell. Mr Ashdown swivelled on the spot and returned.

This may have been the solidarity of a fellow veteran. Mr Ashdown himself has some status in this matter, having once delivered an angry interview as Serb mortar shells exploded with unnerving proximity in the background.

Mr Bell outranks him in this field: he has the distinction of having been shot while covering the disintegration of Yugoslavia. This isn't something that would mark him out as a novelty in Serbia or Kosovo, but it undoubtedly gives him a certain cachet in the Chamber. A whiff of cordite and front-line engagement attends his contributions and preserves him from charges of arm-

chair belligerence which might be levelled at less battle-tested members. Yesterday he brought Mr Cook back to Kosovo with a question about the prospects of the verification mission there. He implied the outlook was bleak in the absence of a credible threat of force.

Mr Cook repeated the rather slender consolation he had offered MPs the day before - it took the West months to learn about the horrors of Srebrenica, he said, but on this occasion we had "clear, accurate information within 24 hours". If something can be done with such information this will all be to the good, but it looks as if the sole

THE SKETCH



THOMAS SUTCLIFFE

virtue of this arrangement is that we get our horror fresh. Instead of wasting weeks in which we know nothing of the atrocity we can start

feeling impotently enraged right away, before the blood has dried.

The awkward gap between boiling outrage and any realistic prospect of doing something to soothe it turned out to be the theme of the afternoon. Mr Cook finds himself in the unhappy situation of having precisely reversed the position of Kipling's harlot - he has responsibility without power, is expected to do something about the delinquencies of various distant countries, but has no effective means of enforcing his will. And on the evidence of Foreign Office questions, diplomacy without gunboats must be a heartbreaking affair - a thank-

less grind in which illusory accord is almost inevitably followed by vicious conflict. The language itself buckles under the strain. In common parlance, for instance, an agreement would indicate that two parties have either resolved or decided to split their differences, that affairs have moved on. In international diplomacy, however, it more usually describes a compulsory fantasy of concord, signed under duress and as limited in its powers of restraint as a wet tissue.

The Holbrooke Agreement, the Wye Agreement and the Simla Agreement were all mentioned, every one the precursor to some

shameless breach of promise. Agreements, in short, aren't a way of making peace with your neighbour, they're a way of making temporary peace with world opinion. And when they have served their purpose and been broken there isn't much that world opinion can do but gasp with indignation.

Flagrancy is the word of choice, a quality attributed by various MPs to President Milosevic, Saddam Hussein, the Israeli government and those supplying arms to Sierra Leone's rebels. Flagrant usually means "shockingly conspicuous" but in this context it might be better defined as "entirely predictable".

MPs condemn family doctors for 'neglect'

A COMMITTEE of MPs moved to "name and shame" failing family doctors yesterday when they took evidence from two GPs who were investigated following complaints.

After hearing their evidence in public, the MPs condemned the GPs' "unprofessional behaviour" and "neglect of duty". One of the doctors before the influential Public Administration Select Committee was Dr Cuthbert, practising in the Wolverhampton Health Authority area, who failed to visit a dying patient in June 1996, although her daughter informed him of her deteriorating condition via an out-of-hours telephone messaging service.

The patient's daughter, who made the complaint against Dr Cuthbert, had earlier contacted a hospice asking for a syringe-driver because her mother had become unable to swallow the morphine prescribed for her pain.

However, Dr Cuthbert, who was contacted on his pager with the request to authorise such treatment, thought the hospice could not provide such treatment and he allegedly told

HEALTH
By SARAH SCHAEFER
Political Reporter

the daughter "the family would have to manage somehow over the weekend".

Later that day, the patient's daughter called out a deputising doctor who injected the patient with morphine. The patient died the next morning.

Dr Cuthbert told MPs: "Yes, with hindsight I would have acted very differently and it was neglect and I made a mistake."

Questioned on the relationship with the patient, whom he had treated for 17 years, he admitted he did not get on with the daughter. "Perhaps I treated the message with a pinch of salt because... she claimed a lot of things her mother could not do which she could. It possibly clouded my judgement."

Dr Cuthbert explained he had thought that hospices only admitted patients with cancer and failed to check on this occasion whether it would also be able to treat his patient.

The hearing is part of an inquiry by MPs into the work and role of the Health Services

Ombudsman following the move to extend his remit to consider clinical as well as administrative complaints.

Rhodri Morgan, Labour chairman of the committee, said MPs were moving into "uncharted water" by calling GPs to such a public grilling.

The second GP to give evidence, Dr Deepak Trivedi, agreed he did not follow guidelines when he struck off a mother, her daughter and son from his list after they had been in his treatment for over 10 years.

Dr Trivedi, who practises in the Wigan and Bolton Health Authority, removed the family from his surgery roll following a disagreement in June 1997 between a GP practising alongside Dr Trivedi and the daughter over breast-feeding.

When the practice refused to explain the decision, the mother made a complaint.

While Dr Trivedi accepted his findings, he added during the hearing: "I must say, however, that for GPs to have to give their reason is one-sided because patients, two of whom were rude and verbally offensive in my case, did not have to."



Michael Meacher MP at the Green Ribbon Political Award where he collected an award for special environmental achievement Mark Chilvers

Labour redraws map of London

CAPITAL PLANS
By SARAH SCHAEFER

PLANS TO create 14 new super-constituencies that will make up the Greater London Assembly, redrawing the map of London, were accepted by the Government yesterday.

Nick Raynsford, the Minister for London, announced the boundaries for the Assembly seats as the Bill to set up the new body and a directly elected Mayor began its two-day committee stage in the Commons.

The move came after the London Labour Party agreed this week to a timetable for selecting candidates. The deadline for nominations is set for 28 February, with candidates to be chosen in September.

The selection procedure for Labour's mayoral candidates is due to be announced within the next few weeks and is likely to block Ken Livingstone.

Accepting the Local Government Commission proposals for the boundaries to be used in next May's elections, Mr Raynsford disclosed in a written reply that the constituencies would have electorates of up to 400,000.

They will each return an assembly member under the traditional first past the post voting system, with the other 11 members elected by proportional representation in a London-wide "top-up" constituency.

During the committee stage, looking at the first four clauses of the Bill, Mr Raynsford hailed the new assembly as the "smallest and most cost-effective of any city-wide administration in the world", adding that the 25-member assembly would be just one quarter of the size of the old Greater London Council.

But Eric Forth, the Tory MP for Bromley and Chislehurst, said the Government's plans would lead to a "burden of bureaucracy which will damage the interests of Londoners".

The Government has proposed a number of amendments to the Bill, including a measure to guarantee funds raised from traffic charges and off-street parking will be spent on transport infrastructure for at least 10 years.

Brown praises Bank over inflation success

FINANCE
By DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

GORDON BROWN, speaking before a House of Lords Committee yesterday, praised the Bank of England for getting inflation close to or on its target for the past six months.

The Chancellor was speaking on the day inflation climbed above the Government's target level of 2.5 per cent for the first time in five months. He also defended members of the Bank's monetary policy committee against charges that they were remote from manufacturing industry. They are



Gordon Brown

"highly professional and not constrained by the narrow interest of pressure groups," he said. Mr Brown said he would reaffirm the existing inflation

target in March's Budget. He said the harmonised European measure would be monitored alongside the existing measure, the retail price index less mortgage interest payments. But he had decided it was not the right time to switch.

Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, offered some comfort to those hoping the monetary committee will reduce the cost of borrowing for a fifth successive time.

In a radio interview yesterday, Mr George said it would be right to continue with more moves in the same direction if there was more uncertainty in the world economy.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Chile relations

THE CHILEAN Foreign Minister Miguel Insulza "fully understands the position taken by the British Government", Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said, pledging the legal process involving the former Chilean dictator, General Augusto Pinochet, would not harm Anglo-Chilean relations.

Abuse funding

THE GOVERNMENT last year gave £18,324 in funding to six charities assisting children at risk, or victims of child abuse, Health minister John Hutton said.

Today's agenda

COMMONS: 9.30am for backbench debates including: Sentencing policy over road deaths. At 2.30pm Northern Ireland questions, Prime Minister's questions. LORDS: 2.30pm, debate on the significance for the economy of the Euro.

Additional £1m aid for Kabbah

THE BELEAGUERED government of Sierra Leone is to receive an additional £1m from Britain, the Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said yesterday.

The donation, funded by the Foreign Office, Department for International Development and Ministry of Defence, comes in addition to more than £20m pledged in aid since last spring. Britain has also given £2m to Ecomog, the mainly Nigerian force which has been fighting against rebel RUF soldiers who are trying to depose the president, Ahmed Kabbah. President Kabbah was ousted in 1997 after an RUF coup, but was restored to power last spring.

Mr Cook said yesterday: "The RUF has a very robust approach to democracy and freedom of expression - they lay off the arms of anybody who disagrees with them." Mr Cook said he had protested to the government of Liberia, which has been aiding the rebel troops.

He added that reports of British firms flying arms to the RUF had been referred to Customs and Excise for investigation. Although the UN arms embargo on Sierra Leone has been partly lifted, it still covers the rebel army.

SIERRA LEONE

By FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

There was controversy when President Kabbah was restored when it emerged that a British firm, Sandline International, broke an international embargo to ship arms to the country. The firm escaped prosecution after saying the Foreign Office was aware of its plans.

Much of Sierra Leone's capital has been destroyed in renewed fighting this month, and up to 200,000 people have been left homeless. Hundreds of Ecomog soldiers have been killed, and British sailors on the HMS Norfolk, sent to the region to give humanitarian aid, are reported to have seen bodies in the water.

Britain is giving logistical support to Ecomog and is sharing intelligence with its officers. The HMS Norfolk is on hand to provide transport for humanitarian aid, including the use of a helicopter. Some of yesterday's £1m will be put to that use.

Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, was due to meet the Sierra Leone finance minister, James Jonah, in London last night to discuss how her department could help.

THE HOUSE



Cook complains about Saddam

PRESIDENT SADDAM Hussein has stepped up his defiance of UN Security Council resolutions, Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said yesterday. "The threat to withdraw recognition of the Kuwaiti border is the latest example of Iraq's wilful failure to accept its obligations to either its neighbours, or to the international community," Mr Cook told MPs.

Ethics improve Britain's image

THE GOVERNMENT'S ethical foreign policy has led to a "radical transformation of Britain's image abroad", and progress has been made over arms exports and training diplomats in human rights issues, Foreign Office minister Tony Lloyd said.

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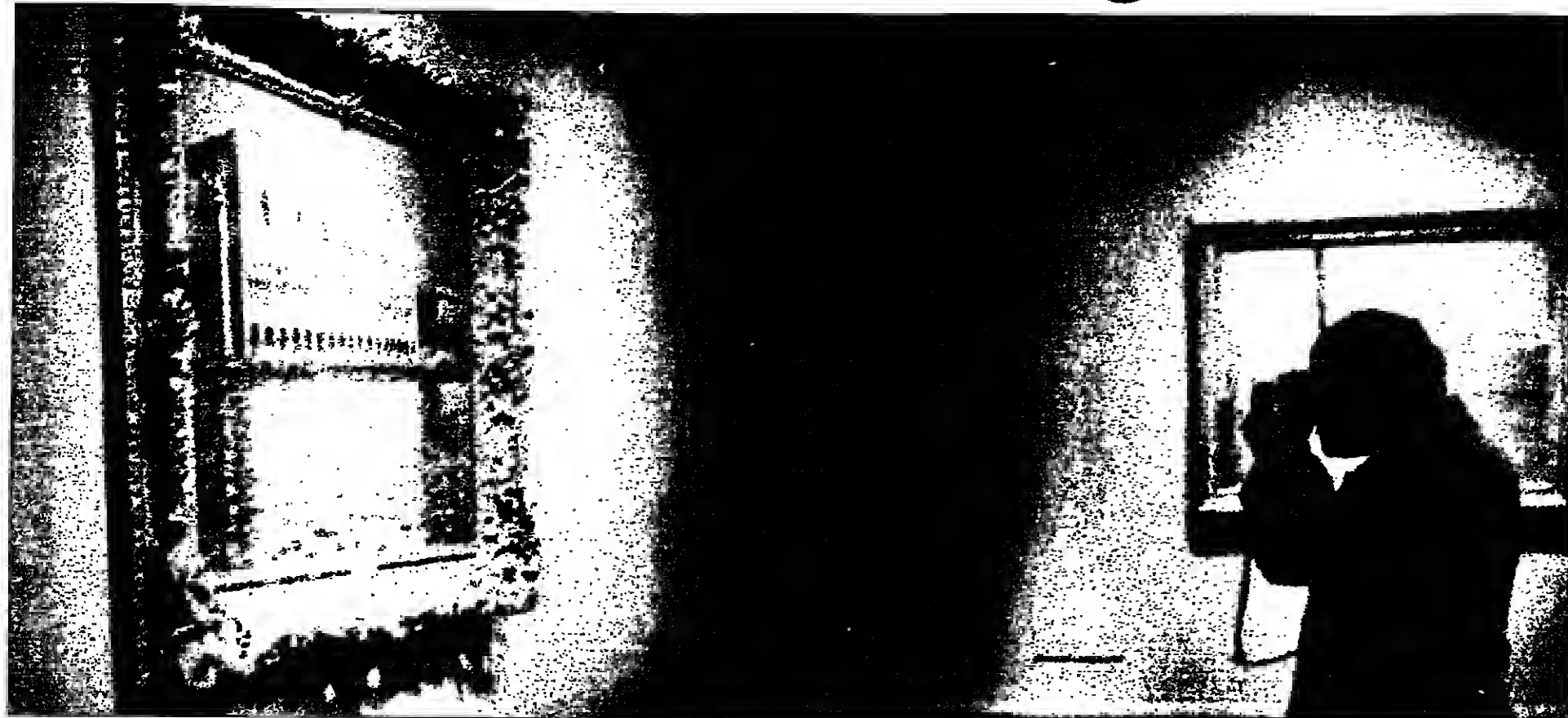


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Art for the masses as big London shows open



Opening day at the Monet exhibition, at the Royal Academy in London, one of three populist art shows which started in the capital yesterday

Tim Hetherington

ART and design can now be described as mass entertainment after the Royal Academy yesterday announced record advance bookings for its Monet exhibition and two other keenly anticipated shows opened their doors to the public.

London last night saw the opening of the Design Museum exhibition, *Modern Britain 1929-1939* - of which *The Independent* is the media sponsor - while, across the Thames, Art99, the London Contemporary Art Fair, held a charity gala opening presided over by Chris Smith, the Secretary of State for Culture. At the same time, invited guests were given the first glimpse of the Royal Academy's certain blockbuster, *Monet in the 20th Century*.

That exhibition, which opens to the public on Saturday, has already sold 133,000 tickets, the highest ever advance booking for an art exhibition in the UK. In addition to the ticket sales, private businesses have booked every evening and breakfast for the duration of the three month exhibition.

According to Ticketmaster, which operates the advance ticket line, the exhibition is

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

selling as good as a hit west end musical. However, the Royal Academy is worried that the public might think they cannot get in. In fact the galleries can accommodate up to half a million over the duration of the exhibition and everyone who turns up on the day should be able to get in.

Mary Ann Stevens, chief curator at the Royal Academy, said yesterday that researching the exhibition had brought new facts to light about Monet. Studying the canvases, many of which he did not exhibit, showed he had started on some of his most famous themes earlier than previously thought.

The exhibition includes some 80 paintings, including views of the artist's garden at Giverny and his atmospheric views of London and Venice. The exhibition culminates in an unparalleled gathering of his last and greatest paintings: the monumental lily panels.

Leading article,
Review, page 3
A decade of design,
Review, page 10

Young Brits show life after Monet

CLAUDE MONET may not need a rock star or a politician to announce he is in town. But Young British Artists still feel a little naked without the "cool" imprimatur from the combination of musician and government minister.

Last night Culture Secretary Chris Smith was joined by former Eurythmics star Dave Stewart at the opening of Art99, the London Contemporary Art Fair. And the third element of contemporary art chic - a fashionable restaurant - was also an essential part of the evening's entertainment: the celebrations continued with a second champagne reception at Ché restaurant in St James's.

Tickets for last night's gala, held in part to raise money for the Serpentine Gallery, were £150. From today, entry to the fair, at the Business Design Centre in Islington, will be £10. That could, of course, prove the bargain of the year if one spots the next big thing among the canvases and installations. Or it could leave the visitor wondering at the gullibility of sections of the art world.

The young Japanese artist Tomoko Takanashi, one of Charles Saatchi's neurotic realists, has extended her reach from the roomful of miscellaneous junk she contributed to the Saatchi show. At Art99

FIRST NIGHT

ART99
BUSINESS DESIGN
CENTRE
LONDON

she has a sculpture which includes Monopoly boards, mobile phones and tape measures. But Saatchi's blessing is lucrative. Even before the doors opened, this exhibit had already been bought.

But with 90 dealers exhibiting, one can take one's pick of a wide range, both in price and taste. From prints for around £100, up to Ben Nicholson's *October 1958 (Brown Goblet)* for £150,000, from a bejewelled kitchen plunger by Claire Carter for £2,200 to a £60,000 Damien Hirst spin painting, elegantly titled *Beautiful Splatter Shit And Puss Painting*, the choice is a broad one.

Indeed, the title can impress as much as the work itself. Simon Tysko's Arran jumper straitjacket would be impress far less without its title: *I Waited (An Eternity) To Hear A Loving Word*. The fair now includes a separate section - *Start* - for 15 younger galleries specialising in new, experimental work. And there's not a still life goblet among them.

DAVID LISTER

Pilot fatigue blamed for jet accident

A HOLIDAY aircraft with 357 passengers on board was badly damaged after a landing performed by pilots who had had little or no sleep for more than 20 hours, an accident report said yesterday.

The cabin crew, who earlier expressed concern about their long hours, also had to land the plane using an incorrect runway chart.

No one was hurt in the incident at Kos airport in Greece on 19 July 1998, in which part of the fuselage of the Caledonian Airways TriStar plane, flying from Gatwick, touched the runway.

Neither passengers nor crew realised they had been involved in a heavy landing. Problems with runway information meant that even after they had landed, the pilots did not know which part of the runway they had touched down on.

The report from the Air Accidents Investigation Branch said the captain and co-pilot had been called out from standby duty which started at 3pm and was due to finish at 8pm.

They had asked if anyone else was available because they were concerned about going on a long night flight which went beyond their on-duty period and they would have little time to rest beforehand.

No one else was available so the captain had tried to sleep in

BY PETER WOODMAN

the afternoon but could not do so because of noise from a local pub.

"He decided to arrive at the airport early and slept in his car for 40 minutes prior to reporting for duty. Other than this, both he and the first officer (co-pilot) had been awake in excess of 20 hours at the time of the accident," said the AAIB report.

It said a combination of factors "resulted in a high workload for the crew at a time of day when they were likely to be experiencing a reduced level of alertness arising from their scheduling and work cycle".

The crash of a 1944-built flying boat on a VIP promotional trip was probably caused by corrosion, an official accident report said yesterday.

The Mayor of Southampton, Michael Andrews, 51, and another passenger, Peter Shave, 43, died in the flooded aircraft despite the efforts of the pilot John Alford, 44, who dived down to try to save them. The 12 other passengers and four crew all survived the crash on 27 July 1998.

The aircraft was flying in an air show organised by Southampton City Council to celebrate the Millennium.

"The corrosion had developed over a long time, but it went undetected," said the report.

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THE INDEPENDENT
Wednesday 20 January 1999

reality

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CAPITAL PLANS
BY DAVID LISTER

Cook complains
about Saddam

Ethics improve
Britain's image

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Peter Hoffmann, said that most farmers could not get payments for working as gardeners. But the Government will allow 11 million farmers to grow flowers, vegetables and a variety of other products.

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Briton

BRITAIN IS becoming a
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A survey of British life showed the fitness industry worth £391m a year with a growth of almost 40 per cent over the last five years. And alongside the move towards jogging and aerobics, the culture of the beautiful has boosted women's toiletries in the past decade.

The 17th annual report
styles by Mintel mark
arch also found Britons
-loving with a sensible s
The cinema-going
continues - attendance

decade are up by 84 per cent. Although the numbers of theatres and museums have risen slightly. But after a surge in the



*Written quotations available on request from Volkswagen Finance. Offer applies from 4th December, 1998 and is applicable to all Polo models ordered by 31st March, 1999. Offer excludes contract hire, leasing companies and national accounts. Cash price, correct at time of going to press, includes number plates, delivery and road fund licence. Credit subject to status. Indemnities may be required. Volkswagen Finance is a trading name of Volkswagen Financial Services (UK) Ltd, Brunswick Court, Bletchlands, Milton Keynes, Bucks MK14 5UL.

١٥٦ من الامم

Farmers told to diversify or go under

BRITAIN'S FARMERS must diversify into other activities if they are to survive. Conserving rural scenery and wildlife could become their most important occupation apart from growing food, the Agriculture Select Committee said yesterday. Forestry and timber products, food manufacturing and marketing, tourism and even light industry will be the other key areas for rural expansion.

Peter Luff, committee chairman, said that in a few years most farmers could be receiving payments from taxpayers for acting as environmental guardians. But the MPs fear the Government will lag behind other EU nations in helping farmers to diversify, putting Britain's agricultural industry at a competitive disadvantage. Their conclusions come in a report on European Commission proposals for statutory new countryside policies across the 15 member-states. These proposals, which the MPs say are "modest and fragmentary", are part of the latest reform of the widely criticised Common Agricultural Policy, which farm ministers are to agree on by the end of March.

Running the policy and all the subsidies which accompany it absorbs half the European Union's budget and costs taxpayers £20bn a year. Britain is

BY NICHOLAS SCHOON

the second-largest net contributor after Germany.

The reform will slash guaranteed prices paid in the EU for most major crops, making Europe's farmers compete on world markets. Set-aside, in which farmers are paid for growing nothing, will be abolished. The changes are needed to avert trade wars and enable the EU to expand to the east, taking in former Warsaw Pact nations, without going bankrupt.

Farmers will receive compensation for these changes, but there are still disagreements between member-states about how long it compensation should continue for.

The MPs on the select committee call for rural development policies and the administration of subsidies for environment-friendly farming to be devolved from Brussels to the nations and regions of Britain. They take the British Government to task for falling behind in developing a strategy for the rural industries of the future which must grow as farming shrinks.

The committee fears other member-states will use the new policies and subsidies for green farming and rural development to give their farmers

an unfair advantage. Support from taxpayers could enable them to sell their food cheap. Britain, say the MPs, must ensure Europe's farm ministers agree to "rigorous control and monitoring." Mr Luff, Tory MP for the rural Mid Worcestershire constituency, said: "There is a well-founded feeling that other EU member-states have been more generous in helping farmers to diversify than successive British governments. British farmers are fearful that their competitors on the Continent will be getting greater subsidies, so there will not be a level playing-field."

The committee took evidence from British farmers before writing its report.

It said the proposals did not set aside enough money to encourage farmers to be more environmentally friendly or to diversify.

"The importance of setting the appropriate level of EU financing for this proposal cannot be overestimated - EU funds are absolutely critical to its success."



Farmers will have to move from traditional concerns to such activities as forestry and even light industry, MPs have said

Brian Harris

HARD TIMES FORCE FAMILY TO SELL UP



Jim Akrigg: Fed up

"I WAS selling my ewes for £60 on average in 1997 but last year they didn't even fetch £25. In the end I [made the decision to] give the last 25 away."

Like thousands of farmers across the United Kingdom, Jim Akrigg, who is selling his hill farm in east Cumbria, suffered greatly in the last

few months. In fact, 1998 was the worst on record for an industry which saw increasing numbers of farmers selling up.

Mr Akrigg, whose family have been farming near the village of Kirkby Stephen since 1946, has decided to move with his wife and three sons to Canada to start

afresh on a new farm. The Akriggs, who kept ewes and cows until recently, are not unique.

A survey of hill farmers conducted recently revealed that 43 per cent of respondents with children said they would not be taking over the family farm.

"We are fed up", said Mr Akrigg. "The damage has been done now and it will take years for things to get any better. Normally, if sheep are down then cattle or pigs are up but recently everything seems to have been flat and in the doldrums." He added: "I want my sons to be able to stand on their own two feet."

Heart deaths inquiry 'will not be a trial'

THE PUBLIC inquiry into the Bristol heart babies disaster will not allow the surgeons at its centre to be made scapegoats, its chairman pledged.

Professor Ian Kennedy, who yesterday announced the list of issues that the inquiry will cover, said the aim was to find out what happened in Bristol and what lessons could be learnt by hospitals elsewhere, rather than to pin blame.

"We are not seeking to focus on individuals but rather we are looking at the whole system which was responsible for the management and care of children needing heart surgery services. It will not be a court, it will not be a trial," he said.

The inquiry, which is set to be one of the most detailed ever undertaken by the NHS, follows an investigation by the General Medical Council into the deaths of 29 babies at Bristol Royal Infirmary.

The GMC found three doctors, two surgeons and the hospital's chief executive, guilty of serious professional misconduct after they allowed complex heart operations on babies to continue, despite warnings from colleagues about their poor success rate.

The GMC acts like a criminal court, so it could investigate only specific charges relating to specific patients where the evidence was strongest.

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

It did not, and could not, look at the wider picture which caused distress and anger to many of the parents who complained their stories had gone unheard.

The inquiry will investigate all types of heart operations, including cases of children who suffered disabilities as well as those who died.

The main issues proposed for phase one of the inquiry are:

- The national and regional context in which heart services were delivered;
- A detailed investigation into the paediatric cardiac unit at the Bristol Royal Infirmary;
- Comparisons between the Infirmary and other hospitals;
- How children were referred to the hospital for treatment;
- Management of surgery and post-operative care;
- How families of babies and children were treated;
- Training of staff;
- The role of post-mortem examinations;
- How and when concerns were expressed and dealt with.

Parents of children who died after heart surgery at the hospital welcomed the announcement but supporters of the three doctors said the inquiry had been biased from the start.

Britons 'obsessed by cult of fitness'

BRITAIN IS becoming a nation "tormented by the state of its health and fitness", spending millions on grooming and exercise.

A survey of British lifestyles showed the fitness industry is now worth £391m a year, a growth of almost 40 per cent in five years. And alongside our move towards jogging and the gym, the culture of the body beautiful has boosted sales of men's toiletries in the last decade.

The 17th annual report on lifestyles by Mintel market research also found Britons to be fun-loving with a sensible streak.

The cinema-going boom continues - attendances over the decade are up by 84 per cent - although the numbers visiting theatres and museums are down slightly.

But after a surge in holidays

BY LOUISE JURY

prompted by the building society windfalls of 1997, stated spending priorities in 1998 showed a note of caution.

Although for the average UK citizen real disposable income rose by 2 per cent last year, most respondents said saving for the future was their main concern.

The research concluded that the new Labour government, £35bn of building society windfalls and falling unemployment caused the surge of consumer confidence in 1997.

And as the rest of Europe integrates, the British seem destined to stay outside, at least psychologically. Mintel found there had been little increase over the last 10 years in the number of Britons "feeling European".

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Clinton sets the ball rolling for Gore

HE MAY be facing removal from office, he may be unable to get his legislation through Congress and he may be only two years away from the end of his term in any case, but President Bill Clinton last night gave notice that he has not given up.

In the State of the Union address he was due to deliver to both houses of Congress, he was set to lay out an array of projects that show he may be down but not out. But behind the facade, much of what he was due to announce had less to do with his own ambitions than those of his vice-presi-

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

dent, Al Gore. Policy details seem designed to set out an agenda for Mr Gore and to guard his weaker flanks against the Republicans. It is a manifesto for the baby-boom generation at the century's end.

The mainstay of the speech was the growing budget surplus, expected to be a cumulative \$2.7 trillion (\$1,700bn) over the next 15 years. There is no consensus about what to do with the windfall - spend it, save it or use it for tax cuts - and last

night Mr Clinton was due to give his formula. He wants some 62 per cent to bolster the pension system.

Between a fifth and a quarter would be invested through the stock market. The US population is ageing and baby boomers fear there will not be enough paid in to keep their pensions. The initiative would keep the pension system solvent until 2055.

Another 15 per cent of the surplus would go to preserving the Medicare system for the elderly, and 11 per cent would be used for new "universal savings

accounts" for individuals to invest for their retirement.

Mr Clinton's Republican enemies in Congress wanted the pensions system privatised. The Clinton proposals, by allowing private management of some of the system's assets, and by introducing the new retirement accounts, goes halfway to this, while preserving a nationally run scheme.

The Republicans preferred to devote the surplus to tax cuts, but Mr Clinton's proposals, which have overtones of careful economy, while reassuring people in their thirties

and forties that there will be a pension waiting for them, will command considerable political support, especially among the less well-off.

The rest of the surplus Mr Clinton will propose spending - in interesting ways. Firstly, he was due to call for considerable investment in education, reinforcing discipline and standards. The state school system is, again, a big concern for those in their thirties and forties with young children, especially those who cannot afford to move them into the private system. Education is one of the

big policy issues favoured by George W Bush, Governor of Texas and the most likely Republican candidate to face Mr Gore in the 2000 elections.

The President was also due to propose using some of the cash to boost military spending, part of a package that would devote \$112bn to the Pentagon, the first increase in spending since the 1991 Gulf war.

Mr Clinton and Mr Gore are vulnerable on defence, where the administration is regarded as weak: a ready-made defence spending increase helps defend this weapon at the polls.

New talks to reform the World Trade Organisation and reduce trade barriers was another of Mr Clinton's proposals. This will appeal to free-trade constituencies and unions and environmentalists, as Mr Clinton was to propose adding labour standards and green considerations into the WTO.

The spread of the speech and the boldness of some of the ideas conceals important facts. The first is that Mr Clinton faces weeks, perhaps months, of trial in the Senate that will absorb a lot of his time and energy. The second is that both

houses of Congress are controlled by the Republicans, and he has found it all but impossible to get his priorities approved for the past two years. There is little reason to think that will change.

In any case, by the end of this year most politicians will principally be thinking about the elections.

But by putting down markers in so many areas, and in particular by appealing to the middle-of-the-road, middle-aged and middle class, Mr Clinton has given a hefty boost to the early prospects of Mr Gore.

President unveils aggressive defence in Senate trial

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

PROTESTING THE innocence of President Bill Clinton and the personal nature of the accusations compared with the great public duties of the presidency, White House lawyers yesterday embarked on the lawsuit of their lives: the fight to keep him in office.

Led by the White House chief counsel, Charles Ruff, who presented the opening statement, the team set out to dissect and discredit the small-print of the charges.

But the most effective advocate for Mr Clinton yesterday was expected to be the President himself.

His State of the Union address last night gave him a unique forum to argue why he should remain in office. Without mentioning the "I-word", he was expected to lay out the case against his removal.

And with his job-approval ratings as high as Ronald Reagan's at their peak and more than 80 per cent of Americans - according to a CNN/USA Today poll - pronouncing his presidency successful, public support is still Mr Clinton's strongest suit.



Ruff: Gave the opening statement for defence

to justify impeachment but that the charges of perjury and obstruction of justice could not be substantiated.

Yesterday the White House indicated it also intended to bolster the political arguments. As well as unexpectedly calling on three Democratic members of the House of Representatives to plead Mr Clinton's case later this week, they also co-opted Dale Bumpers.

Mr Bumpers, who retired from the Senate last year, is a Democrat from Mr Clinton's home state of Arkansas. He is also a Senate diplomat whose word carries weight on both sides of the chamber.

The White House decision to pay as much attention to politics as to law, to persuading the Senate of the political risks of removing the President as well as what they argue are the legal defects of the prosecution case, reflects a twofold concern.

The Clinton camp, it is said, was taken aback by the strength of the prosecutors' presentation, and worried that it has lost the argument over calling witnesses. If politics can trump the law in a constitutional process that meshes the two, the President has won. If not, the odds are more even.



Market wholesalers waiting for trade in Al Sayed, south of Baghdad. Iraqis try to go about their normal lives despite sanctions Reuters

US to arm Iraqi opposition

BY ANDREW MARSHALL

THE UNITED States will announce in the next few days plans to give military support to the Iraqi opposition, figures within the opposition groups said.

The money will go to seven of the most significant groups ranged against Saddam Hussein, including the Iraqi National Congress (INC), the largest. Some opposition sources said the cash may also go to the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, a Shia group backed by Iran, and to the Iraqi Communist Party, though this could not be confirmed. The seven groups will meet in London, probably before the end of the month, to sort out their differences and plan a strategy against the regime, the opposition said.

The announcement marks a victory for the INC in particular, which was backed by the US and Britain but lost favour, and was routed in northern Iraq. It has lobbied long and hard in Washington for renewed support, against opposition from the White House and the CIA. "To be designated as eligible for military aid for the first time, with overt aid, that is a really big deal," said an INC spokesman.

The Iraq Liberation Act, passed by Congress last year, provides \$97m (£60m) to arm and support the opposition. The administration has until the end of this month to designate the groups to whom the cash will go, and it has al-

ready informed Congress, officials in Washington said. The US will also name a co-ordinator for the Iraq opposition, who will be responsible for seeing that the cash is properly spent.

The opposition wants guarantees from the US that if Sad-

dam Hussein attacks them, they will have anti-tank ordnance to defend themselves. They also want to ensure air support if it is needed. The last attempt to back an opposition insurgency collapsed ignominiously when the US refused to provide air support.



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CHRISTMAS has been a
time of high inflation
and rising prices. The
ONS said that the
annual rate of inflation
was 4.1 per cent in
November, up from 3.8
per cent in October.
The rise in prices was
driven by a combination
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The ONS said that the
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inflation rate was the
highest since 1997.

Weakened Hussein comes home to a dynastic struggle

BY PATRICK COCKBURN
in Amman

SPECULATION ABOUT a change in the succession to the throne mounted yesterday in Jordan as King Hussein returned to his capital, Amman, after six months of cancer treatment in the United States.

After piloting his own plane home King Hussein prayed on the rain-swept Tarmac before being embraced by his younger brother Crown Prince Hassan, who acted as regent during the King's illness and whose 33-year stint as heir to the throne is now in doubt.

Among the assembled Jordanian royal family greeting the King was Hamza, the King's 19-year-old son by his present wife Queen Nour, who is the most likely candidate to be the next crown prince.

The loss of all his hair as a result of chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota makes King Hussein look older than his 62 years, 45 of them on the Jordanian throne. Doctors say he has made a full recovery, but his prolonged absence has set off a power struggle within the royal family.

Crowds were of only moderate size as the King drove through a damp and cold Amman. The poor turnout may be the result of the unaccustomed and much needed rain, but the 4.5 million Jordanians are worried by the unpopular 1994 peace treaty with Israel. Jordan's increased hostility to Iraq and a deep economic malaise that has lasted since the Gulf War.

The King increased rumours of a change in the succession on Saturday when he gave a television interview broadcast in Jordan in which he did not refer to Crown Prince Hassan, a hard-working administrator, as his successor or as regent. He later denied re-



Assyrian Christians celebrating yesterday in Amman as King Hussein returned to Jordan after his cancer treatment

AFF

ports that he had discussed the succession with US officials saying: "No one has the right to speculate what goes on in the King's mind."

Jordan is in a delicate diplomatic position because it is a small power squeezed between Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi leader, to the east, and Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, to the west. Both have shown their contempt for Jordanian sovereignty by sending assassi-

nation squads to kill their domestic enemies in the streets of Amman.

In a small house discreetly watched by security police on the outskirts of Amman, Laith Shbhat, the outspoken Jordanian opposition leader, recently released from jail, expressed misgivings yesterday about the possible removal of Crown Prince Hassan. He said Jordan needed political reforms and these could not be carried out by a weak leader.

Crown Prince Hassan is in a curious position within the ruling Hashemite dynasty, installed by Britain after the

First World War. In 1965, when King Hussein was in daily danger of assassination, his son Abdullah was only three years old and his younger brother Hassan was made heir. Today he has several sons with a claim to the throne.

Mr Shbhat, who served seven months in jail after there was rioting in the southern city of Maan last year, said: "Jordan needs a constitutional monarchy and has an authoritarian monarchy. Dissidents are not

killed here, but it is still a police state. Even a taxi driver needs to get a security clearance." Since 1994 the government has tried to marginalise the press and limit the scope of parliamentary opposition.

King Hussein never relaxed his grip on Jordan even from his hospital bed. Supporters of Crown Prince Hassan say he was in no position to resolve problems as regent, though he was blamed for anything which went wrong.

UN warns of famine in Freetown

BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH
in Conakry

NIGERIAN COMMANDERS yesterday claimed they had secured the most volatile rebel-held quarter of Freetown but aid agencies trying to reach the hungry and injured in the capital of Sierra Leone raised questions about the success of the operation.

In Freetown - without electricity or new supplies of food for more than a week - 30,000 people were reported to have taken refuge in the main football stadium. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation warned of a famine.

Ecomog, the Nigerian-led intervention force defending the government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, said yesterday it had completed the process of flushing out rebels from Kissy, in the east of Freetown.

But in Conakry, the capital of neighbouring Guinea, aid agencies including Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) and members of the British medical aid charity, Merlin, said they felt Ecomog was frustrating their efforts to help victims of the war. Fighting flared nearly two weeks ago, for the third time in 18 months.

A spokesman for MSF in Conakry, where all aid and diplomatic efforts are being co-ordinated said: "We're worried about our staff. Ecomog has taken away their communications equipment because it says the rebels have been using it."

"We are doing everything we can, through the United Nations, to fly in this Friday with medical supplies. But we are not optimistic and are left feeling that Ecomog wants as few witnesses as possible while it clears up," he said.

The Royal Navy frigate HMS Norfolk, which has been moored off Sierra Leone for the last four days, was yesterday due to fly food aid to people gathered in Sila Stephen's Stadium in the relatively safe western area of Freetown.

The British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Sir Peter Penfold, who is currently in Conakry, said he was keen to return to Freetown to pursue British efforts to help the government of President Kabbah.

He said: "The rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) - which has no ideology and no popular support - have brought their murder to Freetown. I spoke today to an acquaintance in Freetown who had just seen someone whose hands had been cut off."

Sir Peter said Britain and the international community should continue to support President Kabbah for the sake of the people of Sierra Leone. "They really believe in democracy. The ordinary people brought Kabbah to power and we should help to keep him there because he has no army of his own."

President Kabbah, elected in 1996, was ousted in a coup the following year. He was returned to power after Ecomog intervened last year. At the time a British company, Sandline International, breached an arms embargo when it supplied pro-Kabbah military with arms.

In the past year, since the arms-to-Africa scandal, RUF forces have strengthened their control of the countryside, due in part to Liberia sending arms, and to the arrival of mercenaries from Burkina Faso and Ukraine. Three weeks ago the RUF entered Freetown, from which Ecomog has attempted to oust them ever since. Yesterday President Kabbah was reportedly in Freetown. Today Sankoh, the rebel leader, remained under Ecomog guard in Sierra Leone.

Despite a flurry of diplomatic activity spearheaded by the Organisation of African Unity there were no signs in Conakry yesterday of moves towards peace talks.

The new ford focus is the 1999 car of the year Drive it and find out why

family cars aren't expected to be as comfortable as an executive car, and as agile as a coupe, they aren't expected to give you 40mpg* yet still take you to 115mph, they aren't expected to be as safe as a larger car, and they're certainly not expected to be stylish as well as spacious, but this isn't any family car, it's the new ford focus, and it will change your expectations forever.

the ford focus 1.6i 16v/1.8i 16v zetec

standard equipment includes:
unique "control blade" independent rear suspension - freechoice of 1.6 or 1.8 16v zetec engine - 12 year anti

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power assisted steering system with fully adjustable steering column - remote control central double locking security system with remote

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climate option pack: air conditioning - "quickclear" windscreen - heated washer jets - electrically operated and heated door mirrors - £500 (incl vat)
reflex option pack: electronic anti lock brakes - electronic brake force distribution - electronic dual mode traction control - side airbags - £500 (incl vat)

the ford focus is also available as a five door, estate and four door saloon.



Car Of The Year 1999

*driver and passenger airbags are standard on the ford focus, driver airbag is standard on every other ford car, always remember to use your safety belt. **official fuel consumption mpg: (1.6) urban 30.7, extra urban 51.4, combined 40.9. *plus deposit and optional made subject to mileage / condition if the vehicle is returned at the end of the finance agreement, total payable £14,634, term 25 months, 24 monthly payments of £171.25, optional final purchase payment £5,904, guarantees / indemnities may be required.

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BY ALEX DUVAL SMITH
in Glasgow

Galtieri to be quizzed over baby-stealing

GENERAL LEOPOLDO Galtieri, the man who ordered the invasion of the Falklands Islands in 1982, could be the latest former Argentinian military leader to be charged with baby-snatching from political prisoners during the "Dirty War".

Argentinian judicial sources said that federal judge Adolfo Bagnasco would call General Galtieri in for questioning, probably this week, in connection with the kidnapping of hundreds of babies from women prisoners who later "disappeared". Some of the women gave birth blindfolded and bound in military camps and never saw their babies.

Some of the women were then dumped, alive but drugged, from aircraft into the Atlantic ocean, according to witnesses. Eight other former military chiefs from the 1976-83 military regimes are in detention, facing prison terms of up to 25 years on baby-stealing charges.

"General Galtieri is to be called in for questioning and could be detained shortly," said a source in Mr Bagnasco's office. The general, who lives in Buenos Aires, was given amnesty in 1990 after being jailed for his role in the Falklands defeat.

More than 400 babies were taken from their mothers under the various military regimes. Some were killed with their mothers, some were later traced and reunited with their grandparents, but most were handed over to childless police army officers and are probably alive today unaware of their true families.

President Carlos Menem gave amnesty to Argentina's former military rulers in 1990 after they had spent a few years in jail for their roles in the Dirty War. Since last summer,

BY PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

when a judge ruled that the kidnapping of babies was not covered by Mr Menem's amnesty, eight former Argentinian military chiefs have been detained, including the former junta leaders, General Jorge Videla and Admiral Emilio Massera. General Videla, 72, who overthrew President Maria Estela ("Isabelita") Peron in a coup in 1976, was jailed for life in 1985 for mass murder, torture and



Galtieri: Facing detention

kidnapping during his regime, when an estimated 30,000 Argentinians were killed or disappeared. He was among those given amnesty in 1990.

Some of the eight detainees awaiting trial are in jail, others are under house arrest. Some, including General Videla, also face charges from the Spanish judge Baltasar Garçon - who is seeking to put the former Chilean dictator General Augusto Pinochet on trial - in connection with the disappearance of Spanish citizens during the Dirty War.

In Buenos Aires, the group known as Grannies of the Plaza de Mayo expressed satisfaction

that General Galtieri may be the next to be detained. "He was a maximum leader of the junta. They all bear some responsibility for the era during which they ruled," said Elsa Pavon, a 61-year-old member of the Grannies. While the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo are seeking justice for disappeared sons and daughters they presume dead, the Grannies are seeking the living children of some of those sons and daughters - "the living disappeared".

The Grannies have traced more than 60 children - now young adults - and had them returned to their biological grandparents after court cases. But they are still seeking more than 300 others.

Mrs Pavon's daughter Monica fled with her husband and baby daughter Paula to Uruguay during the Argentinian military era. Due to the collaboration between the Argentinian and Uruguayan generals, the couple disappeared in Montevideo in 1978.

When the military regime ended in 1983, the Grannies put photos of their missing grandchildren in newspapers. Mrs Pavon got a tip that a former policeman had a daughter matching Paula's description.

DNA tests proved the girl was Paula and she was handed over to Mrs Pavon's custody. She is now a 22-year-old student.

The civilian authorities exhumed bodies buried under headstones marked NN (No Nombre, or No Name). They found Barbara and Roberto Lanouscou, aged six and five, both shot in the back. Near by, where they expected to find the children's baby sister Matilde, the diggers pulled out a teddy bear. Matilde was presumably passed on to an army or police officer. She remains missing.

You're welcome: US restaurants offer hand of racial friendship

AMERICAN TIMES
DENNY'S DINER

A FACE appears on the television screen. It is brown, wide-eyed, and framed - quite discreetly - with dreadlocks. "I want to let you into a little secret," says the voiceover. "I'm black."

Reading this in Britain your reaction might be neutral or dismissive: "Well, so what? Of course, you are." But this is the United States and such frankness about race still shocks.

"There are some people who never notice another person's colour," the advert continues. "But most of us do. And that's OK. Don't feel guilty. Noticing a person's colour doesn't make you a racist. Acting like it matters does."

The face fades out to be replaced by a yellow, red and green logo: "Denny's". To an American viewer that logo means two things - a chain of rather old-fashioned restaurants, the sort of no-frills Formica-topped places where you can have breakfast or a burger and be waited on by motherly ladies with large-pocketed aprons. But Denny's means something else. It has behind it two expensive court judgments for discriminating against black customers, or would-be customers, because their main complaint was that they could not get served. Either they were ignored at the door when they waited for the hostess to seat them, or they seated themselves and went unserved.

I, too, have a problem with the hostess system at American restaurants, and not just at Denny's. I fail to understand why, at an eatery which is but a couple of notches up from a fast-food joint, I should have to stand at reception, contemplating dozens of free tables, while waiting for someone to seat me.

It is one of those American practices that leads Europeans to ask whether American service-sector jobs are "real" jobs and, as we wait for the frazzled hostess to notice us, to ponder the economics. How can they afford to keep so many tables empty and employ someone just to seat us? Would they not do better to employ fewer people at higher pay and have them all wait at table, instead of having us wait around for the hostess?

This, however, might be "white" reasoning. If you are black or Hispanic, you might reach a different conclusion. And it was this sort of thing that gave Denny's a bad name with the very customers that it could have courted.



Black customers have not always found it easy to get served in an American diner

Corbis

A new set of television commercials, of which the "I'm black" advert is one, is the company's way of signalling that it has changed. It is costing \$2m and is the brainchild of James Adamson, chief executive of the parent company, Advantica.

Mr Adamson was appointed four years ago when Denny's was at its nadir: it had just paid out \$54m to two groups of aggrieved customers who said they had been refused tables or service for no reason other than the colour of their skin.

A small, slight and bouncy 50-year-old, Mr Adamson embodies that very American virtue: feeling good about yourself and, of course, your company. He has an all-American pedigree, coming from Gap, via Burger King, and is credited with rescuing the restaurant chain's fortunes and reputation.

Last year, Advantica - which owns three restaurant groups besides Denny's - caused a stir by coming second in Fortune magazine's list of best 50 companies for Asians, blacks and Hispanics.

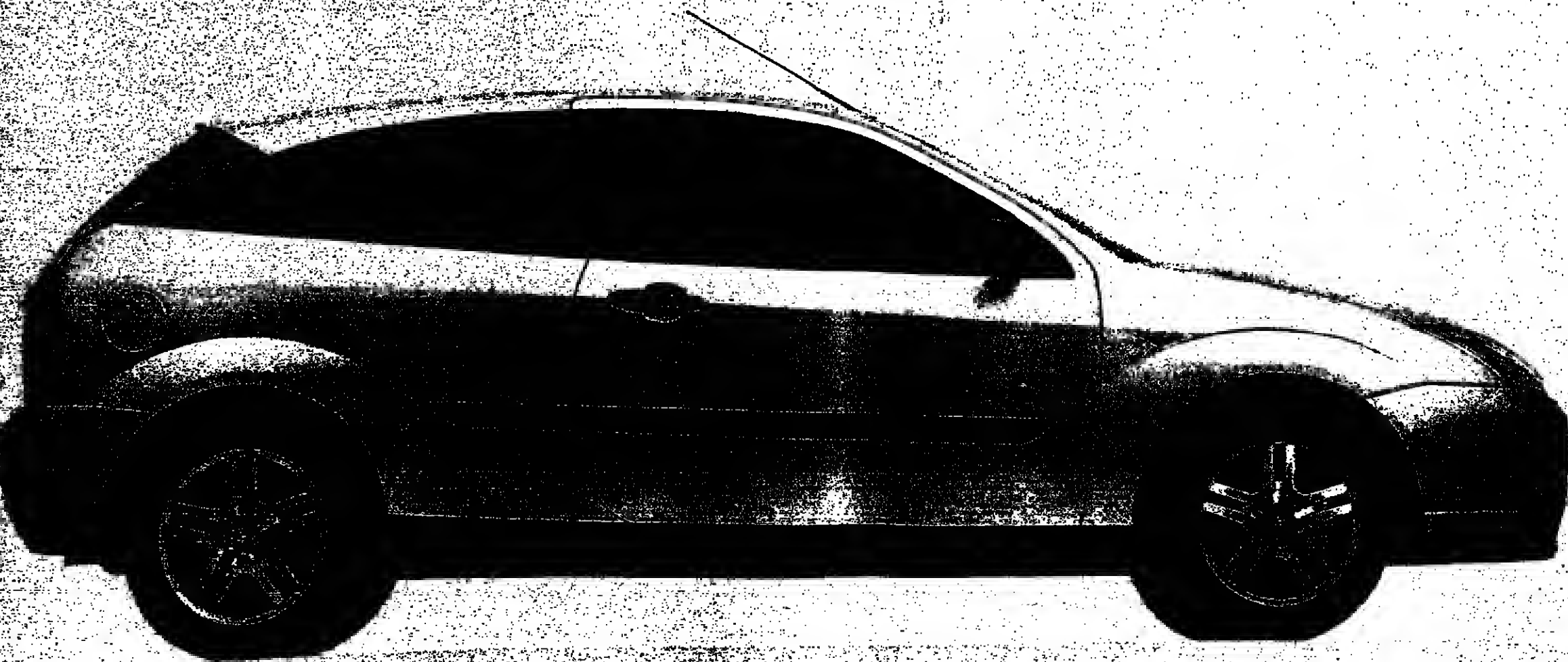
Almost half its employees are now black or Hispanic, and one-third of its supervisory staff are from ethnic minorities. It has "minority" representatives on its board and puts all staff through "diversity" training. The number of Denny's franchises held by black Americans has gone from one to 123 in six years.

Mr Adamson acknowledges that discrimination exists, deliberate or not. "I am a complete supporter of affirmative action," he says, "because I don't believe the playing field is level ... white men tend to hire white men." He is unusual, too, in believing - probably correctly - that racial integration in the US is getting worse rather than better.

The advertising campaign is an expensive gamble that Advantica, which emerged from bankruptcy only last year, can hardly afford. But as the complexion of America changes, and the spending power of minority groups grows, it is a gamble that Mr Adamson, for one, thinks worthwhile.

MARY DEJEVSKY

expect more



the new ford focus



first purchase payment, retail customers only. typical example: monthly payments £171.25, mileage pa 12,000, deposit £4,650, balance £8,450, total credit charges £1,634 (including finance facility fee of £70 payable with first monthly payment. further charges may be including metallic paint - £250, the seven organising publications of the "Car Of The Year 1999" award are vi bilgere, am, autocar, l'automobile magazine, autopista, starn, autovista.

Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
News desk: 0171-293 2636 Fax: 0171-293 2098
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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

IMF admits Asian crisis mistakes

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund has conceded it made mistakes in the Asian financial crisis. A report concludes that in the main its policy prescriptions towards South Korea, Indonesia and Thailand were correct, but there was a crucial flaw: the IMF assumed its programmes would rapidly restore market confidence, and they did not. "However, in the event, the programmes and their initial implementation did not restore confidence quickly enough, capital accounts were much less favourable than assumed and so the reverse happened," says the report. The Fund also conceded it may have misjudged calls for government spending cuts. But it defended calls for rapid monetary tightening, saying that only this could restore currency stability and head off inflationary spirals.

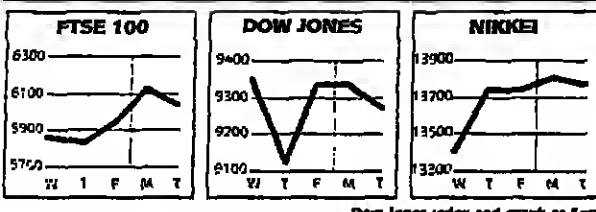
Branson's clothing losses grow

VICTORY CORPORATION, the clothing and cosmetics group owned by Richard Branson (pictured), blamed tough trading for a sharp rise in interim losses. The retailer of Virgin casual clothes and Virgin Vie cosmetics yesterday posted a £10.9m interim loss, compared with a £3.5m shortfall last year. Richard Knight, finance director, said the company had a good Christmas, with like-for-like sales up 5 per cent, but added that sales had fallen back in early January.

Pru's new business rises 1.9%

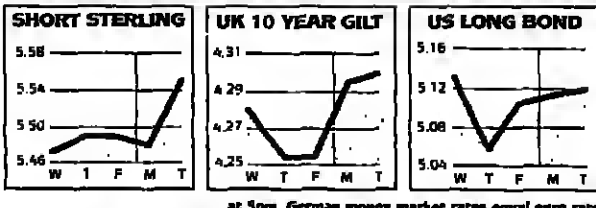
PRUDENTIAL, the UK insurance giant, yesterday reported a 1.9 per cent rise in worldwide new business. New weighted premiums rose from £1,165m to £1,187m in the year to December. UK business rose 13 per cent on the back of the first full-year contribution from Scottish Amicable, the insurer bought in 1997 which sells through independent financial advisers. New business was boosted by £1.3bn in savings ploughed into its new account, Egg.

STOCK MARKETS



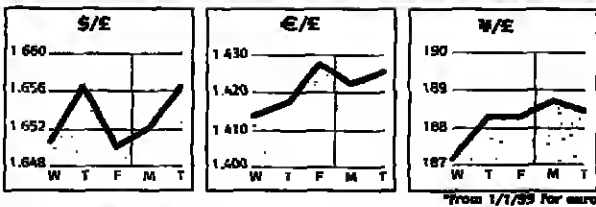
Index	Close	Change	%	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	6027.60	-56.30	-1.57	6195.60	4599.70	2.68
FTSE 250	4874.60	-28.20	-0.80	5070.80	3547.60	3.36
FTSE 100	2832.10	-41.00	-1.43	2959.10	2210.80	2.72
FTSE All Share	2750.74	-37.95	-1.37	2826.52	2133.53	2.83
FTSE SmallCap	2102.90	-3.10	-0.15	2193.80	1534.40	3.83
FTSE Fledgling	1177.50	4.30	0.37	1517.10	1046.20	4.25
FTSE AIM	808.10	-4.50	-0.55	1146.90	761.30	1.22
FTSE Europe 100	2792.23	-26.25	-0.93	3079.77	2018.15	
FTSE Europe 300	1213.54	-10.18	-0.83	1332.07	860.63	1.02
Qaz Jones	9273.35	-85.46	-0.92	9647.94	7400.30	1.65
Nikkei	13770.44	-34.62	-0.25	17352.92	12787.80	1.05
Hong Kong	10290.11	-112.63	-1.08	11925.16	6544.79	3.43
Dax	5073.15	-22.75	-0.45	6217.83	3833.71	1.69
S&P 500	1242.11	-3.45	-0.28	1279.05	933.32	1.26
Hang Seng	2373.41	-22.85	-0.97	2595.30	1557.09	0.29
Taiwan 300	6763.20	-65.72	-0.96	7837.70	5320.50	1.60
Brazil Bovespa	7191.17	38.56	0.54	12339.14	4575.49	8.33
Belgium Bel20	3478.72	-7.63	-0.22	3713.21	2468.40	2.09
Amsterdam AEX	548.88	-4.67	-0.86	600.63	366.58	1.79
France CAC 40	4115.99	-35.69	-0.86	4404.94	3361.21	1.96
Malay MIB30	3313.00	-77.00	-2.31	3917.00	2417.00	1.16
Madrid IBS35	3971.20	-39.80	-0.99	4099.80	2869.90	1.66
Irish Overall	5176.88	26.78	0.52	5981.70	3732.57	1.38
% Korea Comp	618.12	-4.40	-0.71	651.95	277.37	0.98
Australia ASX	2655.80	25.40	0.96	2902.90	2386.70	3.21

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	Yr. Chg	1 Year	Yr. Chg	10 year	Yr. Chg	Long bond	Yr. Chg
UK	5.80	-1.82	5.45	-2.24	4.30	-1.78	4.27	-1.74
US	4.97	-0.66	5.05	-0.64	4.68		5.12	
Japan	0.53	-0.19	0.54	-0.13	1.93	-0.01	2.94	0.37
Germany	3.05	-0.50	2.99	-0.82	3.66	-1.41	4.63	-1.04

CURRENCIES



Index	3 month	Yr. Chg	1 Year	Yr. Chg	10 year	Yr. Chg	Long bond	Yr. Chg
Dollar	1.6564	+0.38c	1.6383		0.8037	-0.14p	0.6104	
Euro	1.4257	+0.15c	1.4079		1.1612	+0.06c	1.1665	
Yen	188.43	-0.50	211.83		113.78	-0.59p	129.28	
£ Index	99.70	+0.00	105.50		104.50	0.00	109.70	

OTHER INDICATORS

Class	Chg	Yr. Age	Index	Chg	Yr. Age	Next Age
Brent Oil (\$)	11.20	0.35	15.18			
Gold (\$)	286.15	-1.10	287.45			
Silver (\$)	5.13	-0.01	5.77			

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.5194	Mexican (nuevo peso)	16.67
Austria (schillings)	19.04	Netherlands (guilders)	3.0505
Belgium (francs)	55.96	New Zealand (\$)	2.9503
Canada (\$)	2.4582	Norway (kroner)	12.01
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8026	Portugal (escudos)	276.50
Denmark (kroner)	10.37	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0215
Finland (markka)	8.2602	Singapore (\$)	2.6572
France (francs)	9.0942	Spain (pesetas)	230.32
Germany (marks)	2.7210	South Africa (rand)	9.9692
Greece (drachma)	449.21	Sweden (kronor)	12.66
Hong Kong (\$)	12.42	Switzerland (francs)	2.2271
Ireland (pounds)	1.0891	Thailand (bahts)	55.29
India (rupees)	63.14	Turkey (liras)	519303
Israel (shekels)	6.2284	USA (\$)	1.6138
Italy (lira)	2696		
Japan (yen)	185.41		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.0202		
Malta (lira)	0.6064		

Rates for indication purposes only
Source: Thomas Cook

Shares plunge on fears that further defence consolidation in Europe will be delayed

Blair 'furious' over BAE's £7bn takeover of Marconi

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

The £7bn takeover of GEC's Marconi defence electronics arm by British Aerospace ran into double trouble yesterday after Tony Blair warned that it could slow the process of European defence restructuring and shares in the two companies plunged.

The Prime Minister's blunt warning was delivered to the chairman of BAE, Sir Dick Evans, and GEC's chief executive, Lord Simpson, at a private meeting on Monday evening.

Lord Simpson, who was ennobled by the Labour government, indicated yesterday that Mr Blair had spelt out in the clearest of terms that he would have preferred to have seen a cross-border merger that included French or German partners. DaimlerChrysler Aerospace (Dasa), which was in advanced merger talks with BAE until just before Christmas, said the BAE-Marconi deal would make horizontal European mergers "impossible and create an obstacle to European integration".

Sir Dick said: "The Prime Minister's views on this and other matters are very important to us."

But, despite a concerted effort to sell the merger to the Government and the City as a "win-win deal" that would benefit shareholders and accelerate the process of defence consolidation, shares in BAE and GEC fell by 14 per cent and 6 per cent respectively.

This cut the value of Marconi by £700m to £7bn and reduced



Sir Dick Evans (right), BAE chairman, pictured yesterday with GEC chief executive Lord Simpson. Tony Blair on Monday told Sir Dick that he would have preferred a cross-border European deal. Mark Chilvers

the stock market value of the combined business to £14bn.

Analysts said that apart from "deal fatigue", the shares had been hit by fears that the merger would be the end of further European consolidation, that the 30 per cent premium paid by BAE was excessive, and that the savings from the merger would go to customers rather than shareholders.

Sir Dick conceded that the merger would initially be seen

as "threatening and an obstacle to making progress" by other companies. But he said that consolidation could best be driven forward if there were just one major player in each country. "The reality is that Europe can afford only one aerospace entity," he added.

The merger will create the fourth-biggest aerospace and defence company in the world after Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon of the US, with

sales of £13bn and £35bn orders.

BAE said there would be cost savings of at least £275m by the third year, which would lift earnings by 10 per cent. There would be job losses but BAE would not give a number. Ken Jackson, general secretary of the AEEF engineering union, said the deal would secure thousands of jobs.

BAE is financing the deal with 1.17 billion new shares, a £1.55bn cash payment to GEC

and £440m of convertible loan stock repayable over three years. Goodwill charged against profits could reach £7bn if BAE treats the deal as an acquisition.

There was speculation about how Lord Simpson would spend the £2.7bn cash pile the rump of GEC has. He rejected rumours GEC would bid for Rascal Telecoms but indicated it hoped to do a big deal to strengthen its telecoms division.

Outlook, page 17

COUNTDOWN TO CONSOLIDATION

January 1995: US approves \$9bn Lockheed/Martin Marietta merger.
May 1996: BAE and Lagardere of France form 50:50 missiles joint venture, Matra BAE Dynamics.
December 1996: Boeing announces \$18bn takeover of McDonnell Douglas.
January 1997: French confirm that Aerospatiale and Dassault will merge.
December 1997: Raytheon acquires Hughes defence business for \$9.5bn.
April 1998: BAE pays £269m for 35 per cent of Swedish aircraft maker Saab.
July 1998: GEC and Finmeccanica merge defence electronics arms.
July 1998: France reveals plan to merge Aerospatiale and Lagardere defence interests and float 30 per cent.
July 1998: Heads of six European countries back formation of single European aerospace and defence company.
December 1998: BAE indicates it is poised for \$23bn merger with DaimlerChrysler Aerospace; GEC announces plans to demerge Marconi and intensifies talks with BAE.
January 1999: BAE and Marconi merge.

News Analysis: France doesn't like it, and Germany is simply livid

'UK first' deal that could set Europe at war

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

AT LUNCHTIME on Monday Denis Ranque, chief executive of Thomson-CSF, touched down at Heathrow airport and sped straight to GEC's Mayfair headquarters by chauffeur-driven car. The head of the French defence electronics group was ostensibly in town for a private dinner, but first he had some business to attend to - a last-inch attempt to wrest Marconi from the hands of British Aerospace.

Mr Ranque said he was prepared to raise his offer from the £6bn already on the table. Lord Simpson, chief executive of GEC, listened politely, but the French entreaties were to no avail. As Lord Simpson said yesterday: "Marconi was the pretty girl at the defence consolidation dance. While there may be a Harvard Business School case to support a Thomson-Marconi merger, the fact is we could not agree either on structure or price."

Later that afternoon the full GEC board met and agreed to sell Marconi to BAE. At 3pm yesterday morning the deal was signed in the City offices of SBC Warburg Dillon Read, GEC's advisers.

It was a signal moment, not just for the British defence industry but for the aerospace

sector right across Europe. If the French were upset that BAE and Marconi had opted for a "UK first" approach to the restructuring of Europe's aerospace and defence industry, the Germans were livid. Until a month ago, it had seemed certain BAE would merge with Marconi but with DaimlerChrysler Aerospace (Dasa) of Germany.

When Sir Dick Evans, the chairman of BAE, broke the bad news by telephone to his opposite number at Dasa's parent company, Jürgen Schrempf, the reception was cool. "Jürgen was disappointed, as you might expect," said Sir Dick.

But BAE shows no signs of being fazed, either by the ripples it has caused across Europe or by the negative reaction its £16bn deal has received in Downing Street and the stock market.

With one bound BAE has become Europe's dominant defence and aerospace company, with an order book of £38bn and sales of £13bn a year encompassing everything from Tornados aircraft and Trident submarines to Airbus commercial jets, bowtizers and state-of-the-art military radar.

In terms of size, it will be streets ahead of its nearest European rival, the state-owned French group Aérospatiale. On a global scale, it will have only half the sales of Boeing, the biggest defence and aerospace contractor. But it will, for the first time, be with in sight of Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, the two other US defence leviathans.

More importantly, it brings Britain's two prime contractors together in an alliance spanning both military platforms and the combat systems that go on them. As Richard Laphorne, BAE's vice-chairman, says: "Up until now, foreign defence contractors have been able to play BAE off against GEC to their advantage. This stops that game."

But there is a bigger question left hanging by yesterday's mega-merger. What is the end game? Will the BAE-Marconi merger hasten the

creation of the European Aerospace and Defence Company (EADC) that Tony Blair and five other heads of government signed up to in July last year? Or will it split Europe down the middle, creating a Franco-German axis and pushing BAE closer to an American tie-up?

Alex Ashbourne of the Centre for European Reform said: "The EADC as originally planned is now dead in the water. It's very sad. BAE-Marconi is now such a powerful entity that it does not need the others. They won't admit it now, but they may well be more interested in transatlantic links than European ties."

Not surprisingly Sir Dick Evans takes a different view, saying that if anything it places BAE in a stronger position to drive European consolidation. "It helps enormously if just one major player speaks for each country."

Many in the market tend to agree. Despite the bellicose noises from Dasa, Chris Avery, aerospace analyst at Paribas, says: "I suspect that after some dalliances with France, Dasa will come back to the negotiating table with BAE in due course. BAE and GEC have concluded that shareholder interests are not best served by doing deals with French companies that are state-owned or part state-owned. Dasa will learn the same lesson."

Indeed others, such as Terry Taylor of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, believe the BAE-Marconi deal leaves the French in danger of being overrun by an Anglo-German-US alliance.

BAE would rather like to have it both ways. On the one hand it points out that the enlarged company will have "boom markets in four other European countries - Sweden,

France, Germany and Italy - because of alliances already forged with contractors such as Matra of France, Finmeccanica of Italy and Saab of Sweden.

On the other hand, Sir Dick is apprehensive about a "fortress Europe" policy developing. He points to the scale of business the enlarged BAE will have in the US, where it will have 18,300 employees and sales of \$4.6bn, thanks in large part to GEC's acquisition last year of the defence electronics business, Tracor.

Given the brinkmanship that has characterised this first round of defence consolidation, it is impossible to second-guess the outcome of the next round. But it is hard to believe BAE will not be at the centre. Sir Dick likens the Marconi acquisition to BAE's sale of Rover five years ago. "That deal unlocked us from the past. This one opens up an entirely new future."

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

AFTER TWO days of gains blue chips fell back, ruffled by the Brazilian interest rate increase and the UK inflation rate. Footsie closed 96.3 points lower at 6,037.6 and supporting indices were also weak.

The latest mega-deal left the two participants nursing sharp falls. British Aerospace, buying Marconi from the General Electric Co for £7.7bn, dived 68p to 425.5p, and GEC dived 31p to 546.5p. Suggestions that the sale will prompt GEC to look for acquisitions boosted Psion and Rascal Electronics.

Derek Pain, page 21

NEW YORK

SHARES FELL in morning trading in a volatile market characterised by big price swings. Traders were concerned by nervousness about the durability of the boom in Internet-related stocks.

The Dow Jones index initially rose on positive earnings reports from the banking sector and news of a multi-billion dollar merger between AllHome and Excite, two Internet stocks. But the shares were quickly sold in a bout of profit taking. At mid-day the Dow was down 83 points, or 0.84 per cent, at 9,252.53.

TOKYO

THE JAPANESE market slipped as traders took profits on export stocks, amid fears the yen had fallen as far as it could. The Nikkei 225 fell 0.25 per cent to close at 13,770.44, down 34.62 points.

Car manufacturers, including Toyota and Nissan, weakened amid concern that the yen would bounce back from yesterday's level of 114.75 to the dollar, hindering their ability to export.

Sentiment was also affected by a fall in bond prices that pushed up yields by 13 basis points, raising the cost of borrowing.

HONG KONG

STOCKS fell by 1.08 per cent as overseas fund managers sold off holdings in utilities and red chips. The Hang Seng ended the day at 10,290.11, down 112.43 points.

Sentiment was subdued by reports that the HK dollar was next in line for devaluation. Amid thin volume, the market was also pulled down by futures-related trading.

Brokers said European fund managers were still reducing their Asian portfolios. This week any gains would depend on Wall Street, they said.

SAO PAULO

SHARES continued to surge in spite of expectations that investors would take profits after a two-day bounce. The Bovespa index rose 3 per cent in early trade, adding to gains of 40 per cent since Friday's decision to float the real.

Traders said foreign investors were forced to buy locally rather than withdraw money from the country, after the Brazilian central bank raised interest rates on Monday.

Brazil's currency, the real, is trading at 1.55 to the dollar, 22 per cent lower than a week ago.

This was the best defence deal going

TONY BLAIR doesn't much like the BAE-Marconi merger, and nor did the market greet it with unbridled enthusiasm yesterday. Even so, there are compelling reasons for believing this to be the best deal either company could have done, for shareholders, for employees and, for that matter, for the country.

The Prime Minister frets that the lack of a cross-border element to the merger will make it harder for him to show off his pro-European credentials as he caddies up to other heads of government on the Continent. He worries that BAE's "UK first" policy will slow the process of European defence integration.

But there are no prizes for guessing who would have borne the brunt of any job cuts in a cross-border deal. The French talked boldly about slicing £500m off the cost base of a merged Thomson-Marconi business. Given that it is 20 per cent more expensive to employ someone in France and even more costly to sack them, it is obvious where the axe would have fallen.

Perhaps that is why the unions, amongst others, leapt to the defence of BAE when not so long ago this would have been the sort of deal that had them manning the barricades.



OUTLOOK

The plunge in BAE's share price will undoubtedly have given Sir Dick Evans pause for thought yesterday. Some of the fall is explained by deal fatigue, and the premium is certainly fancy - Marconi is departing GEC on an exit multiple of 27 times earnings. But again the reaction was probably overdone. Had BAE allowed Lockheed or Thomson to snap up its biggest supplier from under its nose, the damage to shareholder value might have been far greater.

Deprived of the opportunity to play GEC and BAE off against one another, it is the Americans who have most to worry about as far as the European field of battle is concerned. As for DaimlerChrysler Aerospace, it can

furnish all it wants about a horizontal merger with BAE being dead in the water. But when it sees how poorly its own shareholders might be served by joining forces with its state-influenced French counterparts, who would bet against it suddenly finding an ally in BAE again?

NatGrid/Energis

NATIONAL GRID was once an unrecognised and unloved organisation, a hidden treasure buried within the 12 regional electricity companies that owned it. Eventually the City and the Government realised it might be worth something and forced a demerger. The years passed and then all of a sudden it emerged that there was another treasure lying Russian doll-like inside the Grid - a telephone company that ran its cables along the Grid's electricity pylons. They called it Energis and floated a quarter of its equity on the stock market.

This was always going to be a controversial means of value recognition. Why not follow your own path to stock market independence, free market purists asked, and simply demerge Energis? All kinds of ingenious excuses were tabled, but essentially it

came down to this quite basic line of reasoning - because National Grid, having given birth to Energis, wanted to keep some of the potential upside in the stock for itself.

In a way, it has been proved correct. The telecoms sector has soared and with it, Energis. The Grid's remaining 75 per cent stake has come to account for more than 40 per cent of its total stock market value, and everyone, the Grid's management included, has been able to bask in its warm glow. Time, then, to sell some more. Fortunately for the Grid, there can be no question of a demerger this time round. Having already sold some of the company, the tax implications would be horrendous.

But essentially it is still the same old thing. David Jones, the Grid's laconic chief executive, just cannot let go. The Grid's bankers are even creating a convertible bond, backed by the Grid's own cash flow, to allow the Grid to participate in the potential upside of the shares they are selling. Since disposing of another 25 per cent will allow Energis to qualify for the FTSE 100 Index, this could be quite considerable.

Given how much money he's made for his investors, nobody's going to quarrel too much with Mr

Jones about all this. Who knows? There may be another Russian doll or two yet to be moulded out of the £1.2bn the Grid will receive from this latest sale.

All the same, there is a certain lack of logic about the Grid's position. As quickly as it sells out of Energis, it is investing in exactly the same sort of telecom ventures elsewhere, most recently in Brazil. There is an obvious conflict of interest here that won't finally be resolved until the Grid is out of Energis altogether.

Central bankers

SO WAS it worth waiting for? Yesterday saw publication of the European Central Bank's first monthly bulletin, a 62-page tome which will, according to the ECB, become one of its "most important means of written communication".

In theory, therefore, the bulletin ought to carry at least as much clout as the Bank of England's quarterly inflation report, essential reading for anyone active in the UK markets. In practice, the ECB bulletin is nothing of the kind. Yesterday's issue was a combination of public relations puffery and largely historic eco-

nomics analysis. As a guide to either the ECB's view on recent economic developments or the likely level of future European interest rates, it was little short of useless.

This shouldn't come as much of a surprise, given the opposition of Wim Duisenberg, ECB president, to improving the transparency of European monetary policy. Mr Duisenberg has rejected calls for the ECB to follow the example of the US Fed and the Bank of England and publish the minutes of its meetings.

He also seems to have eschewed the established practice of using public speeches to signal changes in interest rate policy. Just days before December's co-ordinated cuts in European interest rates, for example, Mr Duisenberg was intimating to all and sundry that there was no immediate need for interest rates to fall.

As a result, financial markets now take everything the ECB president says with a large pinch of salt, including the assertion in yesterday's monthly bulletin that European interest rates are now at about the right levels.

One reason why Mr Duisenberg has chosen to shroud the ECB's decision-making process in secrecy is

that this is the way things were always done at the German Bundesbank, a model independent central bank with an "inflation-busting" reputation superior even to that of the US Fed.

Certainly you cannot quarrel with the Bundesbank's record, so who are we to challenge its methods? Times change, however, and what may once have been appropriate for Germany hardly looks like doing the trick for Europe as a whole.

The Bundesbank could get away with not talking to the market for one reason, and one reason alone - its impressive track record. Bundesbank officials had a long history of keeping inflation under control and firmly resisting political pressure. The same is unlikely to be true of the ECB.

The short history of the ECB to date has been marred by political fudge, most visibly over Mr Duisenberg's own appointment as its president. If the ECB is ever to enjoy the same reputation as the Bundesbank, and if Mr Duisenberg is going to be able to soothe troubled markets as effectively as that doyen of central bankers, Alan Greenspan, transparency and communication have to be improved.

National Grid in £1.1bn Energis sell-off

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

NATIONAL GRID moved to cash in on the soaring value of telecom stocks yesterday by reducing its shareholding in Energis, its fast-growing telecom subsidiary, from around 75 per cent to below 50 per cent.

National Grid will offer between 71 million and 75 million Energis shares in the form of shares and convertible bonds to institutional investors in Europe and the US. Dealings are expected to start once the offering closes next Tuesday.

The move will raise approximately £1.1bn in cash, allowing National Grid to reduce its debt levels in the wake of last month's \$3.2bn acquisition of New England Electric System, the US electricity distributor.

David Jones, chief executive of National Grid, said the sale would also increase the free float of Energis shares, satisfying demand from investors keen to buy into the telecom sector and allowing the company to be included in the FT All-Share index.

Energis shares duly soared 9 per cent, closing up 132.5p at 1655p in a falling market. Energis has watched its shares rise fivefold in the past 12 months on the back of booming data communications and Internet traffic, including its deal to provide the infrastructure for



David Jones, chief executive of National Grid (left), with Mike Grabner of Energis yesterday. National Grid is reducing its stake to below 50 per cent. Mark Chivers

Dixons' innovative Freeserve Internet service provider.

The sale follows National Grid's announcement last year that it planned to sell down its shareholding in Energis over a three to five-year period. Under the current deal, it is not allowed to sell any more shares in the market for six months.

In a complex offering designed by HSBC, the investment bank, National Grid plans to raise between £600m and

£800m by placing Energis shares directly with institutions. The remainder of the proceeds will come from the sale of convertible bonds based on Energis shares.

Each bond, which will mature after four years, will convert into a proportion of an Energis share dependent on how much the shares have risen since the offering. However, they will also carry a coupon of between 5 and 6 per

cent, which will be paid by National Grid.

Mr Jones said the bonds were designed to broaden the appeal of Energis to other investors, many of whom do not invest in the company because it does not pay a dividend.

The entire exercise is expected to trigger a capital gains tax bill of about £200m for National Grid, while advisers' fees will cost a further £20m. Outlook, this page

Sotheby's looks for Net profit with a leap into cyberspace

SOOTHEBY'S, the venerable auction house with a 250-year history, took a startling leap into the cyber-future yesterday, announcing the creation of sothebys.com.

The company hopes to tap millions of new customers who may prefer mouse-clicking over paddle-waving when bidding for art, jewellery and collectibles.

Also yesterday, At Home Corp, a California company that specialises in delivering high-speed Internet connections to private homes in the United States, revealed that it is to buy Excite Inc, the owner of one of the most popular portals on the World Wide Web, for a stunning \$6.7 billion in stock.

If completed, the At Home

BY DAVID USBORNE
in New York

transaction will be largest single deal in the history of the Internet, eclipsing the America Online's recent purchase of Netscape Communications for \$4.2bn.

At Home will be paying nearly double Excite's market value, put at about \$3.4bn at the close of trading last Friday.

Both announcements offered fresh illustration of the ongoing explosion of consumer and investor interest in all things do to with the Internet.

Recent weeks have been marked by soaring prices among stocks offered by fledgling Internet enterprises,

most of which have yet to make a dollar in profit.

One company that has been turning profits is eBay, which has led the way in taking auctions into cyberspace and has become one of the most popular destinations on the Web where consumers enter bids from their PCs for articles for sale.

Among the measures of eBay's success has been its market valuation. Listed publicly only last September, it now has a market value six times that of Sotheby's.

"With the launch of sothebys.com, Sotheby's enters an exciting new era," said Diana Brooks, president of Sotheby's, in New York yesterday. She made a nod to the success of eBay, while not men-

tioning it by name. "It is clear that the Internet is superbly suited for holding auctions," she remarked. The pressure will now be on Christie's, the longtime rival of Sotheby's, similarly to take the cyber plunge.

An important beneficiary of the At Home deal, meanwhile, will be AT&T.

The giant telephone company, which is anxious to harness the Internet, is in the process of acquiring Telecommunications Inc, which itself has a large share in At Home.

Though it trails Yahoo! among the pioneers of portal sites, Excite should none the less prove powerful in attracting new Internet customers.

Hopes of rate cut fade as inflation overshoots

PRE-CHRISTMAS high street price rises pushed inflation above target for the first time for five months, according to figures released yesterday.

News that the underlying inflation rate hit 2.6 per cent in December, combined with evidence of returning consumer confidence, was poorly received in the City. Sterling rose to its highest level yet against the euro during afternoon trade amid fears that the Bank of England would hold fire on interest rates next month.

The Office for National Statistics said the rise in the underlying inflation rate was largely attributable to the increases in prices of seasonal food - such as potatoes - and household goods.

Analysts said the marked rise in prices of household goods was largely due to the "pre-January sales" effect. Most retailers often raise prices before Christmas as this allows them to advertise sharp reductions at the start of the January sales.

The rise in prices of seasonal food - which increased by 6.1 per cent in the month - was primarily caused by the poor weather, says the ONS. In the

BY LEA PATTERSON
AND DIANE COYLE

same period in 1997, seasonal food prices rose just 2 per cent.

City economists said the inflation figures - which also revealed that the headline rate sank to a seven-month low of 2.8 per cent - could provide the Bank with an excuse to leave rates unchanged next month.

However, several analysts emphasised that the overall trend in UK inflation was still downwards. Most expect the underlying rate to fall below target later this year.

Jonathan Loynes at HSBC Securities said: "We still expect

RPIX (the underlying inflation rate) to drop below target as weaker costs push goods inflation into negative territory and slowing activity eases price pressures in services."

Fresh evidence of reviving consumer confidence also dented rate-cut hopes. GfK, the market research company, said confidence rallied in January following a string of interest-rate cuts by the Bank.

The GfK confidence barometer was minus 3 in January, up from minus 8 in December. Like other market researchers, GfK said that although consumers were gloomy about the general state of the economy,

they were reasonably upbeat on the outlook for their personal finances.

GfK, which carried out its research on behalf of the European Commission, said there had been a sharp rise in employment intentions in businesses in the service sector.

There was fresh pressure on the Government yesterday to switch to an inflation target based on the harmonised European price index. It will be publishing this inflation measure alongside retail prices from next month.

Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat Treasury Spokesman, said the Chancellor should consider announcing the switch in his March Budget. The British Chambers of Commerce will also urge this move in its Budget submission.

Separate figures yesterday showed that the Government borrowed more than the City had expected last month. The Public Sector Net Cash Requirement (equivalent to the old Public Sector Borrowing Requirement) was £2.2bn. But City experts still believe that the Government will easily meet this year's borrowing target of £2.8bn.

Brazil raises interest rates

WORLD STOCK markets were shaken yesterday by the surprise increase in Brazilian interest rates on Monday night. The central bank's decision to raise the prime lending rate from 20 to 41 per cent and the benchmark TRAP lending rate from 36 to 41 per cent achieved its aim of helping to stabilise the Brazilian currency. However, analysts

warned of longer-term damage to economic growth.

Share prices fell in London and New York, where investors were worried by reports that seven Brazilian states were threatening to default on federal debts.

Brazilian share prices were trading modestly higher in relief that the central bank had stemmed the real's slide.

This announcement appears as a matter of record only

December 1998



Independent Newspapers, PLC

IR£380,000,000

Term Loan Facility

Arrangers

Bank of Ireland Corporate Banking BT Alex Brown International

Participating Banks

AIB Capital Markets

Bankers Trust Company

Lloyds Bank Plc

Ulster Bank Markets

Bank of Ireland

Irish Intercontinental Bank

Scotiabank (Ireland) Limited

Agent

Bankers Trust Company

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Bid rumours boost House of Fraser shares

STOCK MARKET professionals, who should have waxed rich on the flow of mega-mergers which have sent shares soaring, concentrated on a more mundane deal, worth a mere £230m or so.

They alighted on a story, which has simmered for a few weeks, that House of Fraser's days of independence were coming to an end.

The department store chain's shares climbed 15.5p (after 17.5p) to 88p, highest since the autumn.

A venture capitalist bid was one guess; another suggested Shami Ahmed, the entrepreneur behind the Joe Blaggs jeans empire, who has already shown interest in quoted companies, was the predator.

HoF has the somewhat dubious distinction of looking a sitting duck for a takeover strike. It has a poor trading record and assets are thought to be worth around 180p a share.

The shares were floated at 180p five years ago; they did touch 228.5p at one time but

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

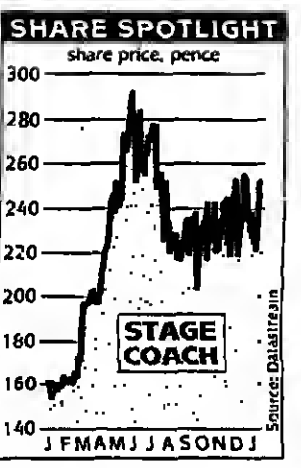
took the view it had overpaid and also made vital European defence alliances much more difficult to achieve. The shares dived 66p to 426.5p. GEC did not escape the disenchantment, falling 31p to 546.5p.

Profit-taking was, of course, a factor in the response to the Marconi deal, and after the sharp gains of the last two trading days could be blamed for some of Footsie's 96.3 points plunge to 6,027.6.

The slide in Vodafone, off 102.5p to 1,123p, was largely due to the games arbitrageurs play. Seaq put volume at nearly 82 million shares, with arbs selling to keep their positions in line.

Once again market turnover was high, nudging 1.1 billion, as Footsie swung between a 14.8 gain and a 107.5 fall.

Supporting shares were in the doldrums. The mid cap



before the recent rumours started to be felt were down to 51p.

The speculators who scored with Philip Green's bid for Sears were, perhaps not surprisingly, said to be chasing HoF shares. The fund manager Phillips & Drew, active in Mr Green's assault on Sears, has 22.3 per cent of HoF and, as in the case of Sears, would dearly like to see at least some of the lost value restored to its investment.

One suggestion was that the fund managers were mulling over a bid of 100p for their stake; the price the market believes the would-be bidder is prepared to offer for the rest of the shares.

HoF was only one second-line share under the speculative spotlight. Lex Service, the vehicle group up 23.5p to 384.5p, was another. The British Aerospace £7.7bn Marconi acquisition from General Electric Co also produced thoughts about GEC's possible targets.

Pision, the hand-held computer maker, was regarded as one likely candidate, gaining 75.75p to 726.5p. Another thought to be under possible GEC scrutiny was Rael Electronic, 18.5p higher at 386p.

BAe's Marconi deal did not go down well. The market

cash in at least some of its Energis chips as telecom shares stretch into the stratosphere gave its shares a modest electrical charge - up 17.75p at 545.25p.

Stagecoach, the transport group, continued to benefit from its Hong Kong Citybus buy, moving ahead 10p to 250.25p.

Debenhams, following an encouraging trading statement, put on 10.5p to 350.5p but more gloomy tidings from Body Shop produced a 4p fall to 85p.

Boots, hit by BT Alex Brown cutting its profits forecast by 6 per cent to £544m, dropped 43p to 887p. City Centre Restaurants, reflecting sobering Christmas trading, fell 5p to 72p.

Blue Circle Industries lost another 10p to 271p as analysts downgraded following meetings with the company. It seems profit forecasts have been cut by around £10m to £135m.

Diageo, the spirits giant, was another under the analytical whip. Its shares suffered a 12p hiccup to 670p

ALBRIGHT & WILSON, the chemical group which returned to the market four years ago, edged ahead 2p to 63.5p as speculation continued that a management buyout was planned. At one time the shares topped 200p and were riding at 191.5p in the spring. The group, like others in the chemical industry, has found the going tough but profits are expected to recover to £53.5m from last time's depressed £31.7m.

as HSBC put them on its sell list.

Compass, the contract caterer, improved 15p to 797p with Sutherland's saying buy despite the 67 per cent out-performance over the past year. The sugar group Tate & Lyle was sweetened by CSFB, up 13p to 392p.

Media shares continued to flutter on the bid interest in Mirror, little changed at 206.5p. Newsquest rose 16.5p to 284.5p and Informa 14p to 316p. Freepages, on its Internet prospects, gained a further 2p to 23.75p.

On-Line's remarkable run continued, with the shares, 16.5p at the start of last week, jumping 39p to 172.5p. There is a growing suspicion that the computer games group will eventually use its share price strength to tap the market for cash, possibly through a rights issue.

Dagenham Motors moved ahead 9.5p to 158p as Polar Motor, a joint company formed by Ford and Jardine Matheson, produced its bid. Dagenham is Britain's largest Ford dealer.

Flextech, the TV group, rose 38.5p to 753.5p after Merrill Lynch lifted its target from 745p to 600p.

SEAQ VOLUME: 1.01 billion
SEAQ TRADES: 83,478
GILTS INDEX: 116.13 +0.03

Somerfield keeps the City doubters at bay

BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

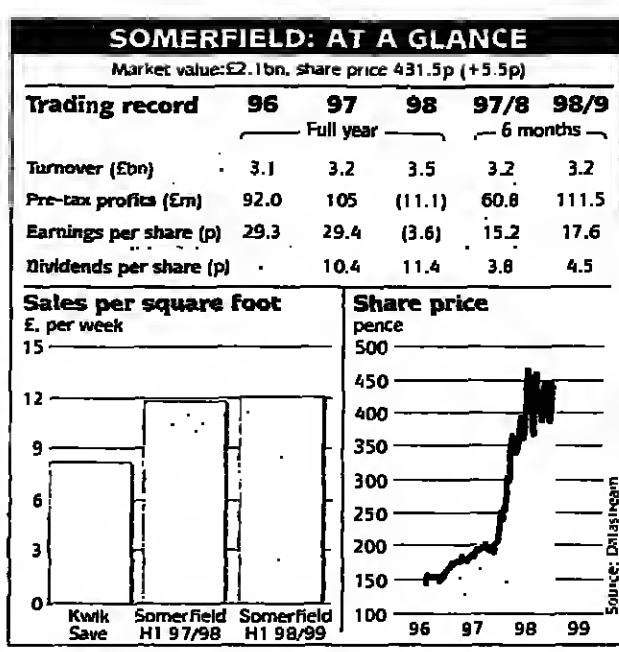
SOMERFIELD, the supermarket group which merged with Kwik Save last year, said yesterday that the integration of the Kwik Save stores was on track and sales in its Somerfield outlets were encouraging.

Reporting doubled profits before exceptional items to £113.8m in the six months to November, the company said it had started the conversion of the Kwik Save stores to the Somerfield format. It is also expanding its petrol forecourt deal with Elf to open up to 50 more stores over the next 18 months, creating 1,500 new jobs.

Somerfield, which walked away from a merger with the Booker cash and carry chain in September, said a Booker deal was no longer part of its plans. "It's not on our radar screens," said David Simons, chief executive. However, he refused to rule out a possible deal at a later stage.

It is deals that have transformed the Somerfield share price since its troubled launch on the stock market in August 1996. The shares soared on the back of the Kwik Save merger as the market warmed to the potential cost savings and buying efficiencies.

Though the City has been sceptical about the company's ability to grow sales and keep



The Food Giant stores have already been converted to the Kwik Save format. But though Mr Simons and his team insist the number of store closures will remain at 130, analysts believe the final number will be higher and that other under-performers will be closed.

The management task of integrating nearly 900 Kwik Saves with Somerfield's own 473-strong portfolio should not

Internet deals give Zergo a 30% boost

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

SHARES IN Zergo leapt 30 per cent yesterday after the supplier of software that allows people to conduct secure Internet transactions unveiled a series of strategic partnerships.

Zergo is forging closer links with Intel, the US computer chip giant, while also striking a strategic alliance with Price-waterhouseCoopers, the consultancy firm, to sell its products in Europe and the Middle East.

The news drove Zergo's share price up by 162.5p to 702.5p. The shares have risen more than fourfold since the beginning of December on hopes that Zergo will cash in on the booming market for commerce conducted over the Internet.

Last month Zergo merged with Baltimore, its Irish rival, in a move that made it the world's second-largest supplier of Internet security software.

Under the terms of its deal with Intel, Zergo will develop products to conform with a security standard the US group has designed. Matthew Bowcock, Zergo's marketing director, said the deal put the company in a good position to supply software to Intel when it releases processors for the electronic commerce market.

The PwC agreement, meanwhile, will lend the consultancy group's muscle to Zergo's Public Key Infrastructure products when developing electronic commerce solutions.

Industry observers welcomed the announcements, but said they did not immediately add a great deal to Zergo's prospects. "In order to crack it in this market you have to crack it in the United States," said George O'Connor, an analyst at Granville, who rates the shares a hold. "Our concern is that we want to see these guys actually go out and win business in the US."

He added that the market in the shares seemed frothy after yesterday's rise, which lifts Zergo's market value to almost £200m. However, he said investors were unlikely to pay much attention to conventional valuations. "People are buying into a concept," he said.

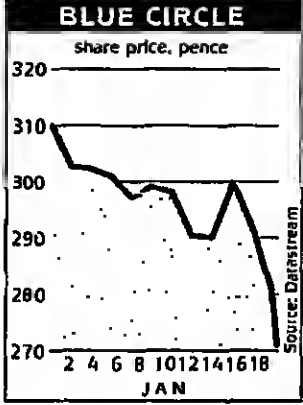
Blue Circle fights off Asian fever

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

BLUE CIRCLE, the building materials group, is meeting top analysts to warn them that 1998 profits will not meet some expectations, it emerged yesterday. The veiled profits warning caused a sharp slide in the company's share price, which shed 7 per cent in the two days.

The company's finance director, James Loudon, is engaged in a whirlwind tour of the Square Mile to brief 30 brokers ahead of the results announcement on 29 March. Mr Loudon is understood to have explained to analysts that a £800m-plus acquisition spree in Asia in the second half of 1998 would hit Blue Circle's earnings in 1998 and this year.

In August the group bought out its joint venture partner in Associated Pan Malaysian Cement, Malaysia's leading ce-



ment producer, for £185m. In October it acquired the second-largest cement maker, Kedah, for £351m, followed by a £185m swoop on a number of companies in the Philippines.

A source said: "We are explaining fully how our recent acquisitions are going to dilute earnings in the next couple of years." The warning is believed to have prompted some analysts to consider cutting price targets for 1998 earnings by up to £10m to about £135m.

Rumours of the briefings filtered out on Monday. Blue Circle's shares, which fell out of the FTSE 100 in September, went into a spin: the stock yesterday closed down 10p at 271p, following a 10.5p slide on Monday.

Industry experts said the company was paying the price of increasing its exposure to the crisis-ridden Asian economies. They said that although the turmoil in the Far East had helped Blue Circle buy at bargain prices, some of the companies bought were in dire financial

A large sum of Monet

MONET IN the 20th Century", which had its press day at the Royal Academy in London today, is the latest blockbuster art exhibition to be sponsored by Ernst & Young, following the "Picasso Sculptor-Painter" (1994), "Cezanne" (1996) and "Bonnard" (1998).

And while Monet's water-lilies and views of the Thames at the RA form EY's biggest ever sponsorship, the firm's partners also found the cash to back a major David Hockney exhibition in Paris, opening this week.

So, I asked Nick Land, EY's UK chairman, how much is all this costing?

"I hate to think what it all comes to," Mr Land said. Well, how about the annual budget for arts sponsorship? "I honestly don't know - hundreds of thousands - not into the millions - a pretty sizeable slug."

Not the kind of accuracy



The logo consists of a brick with two blue dots on it. And all the new subsidiaries have been labelled "Hanson". No doubt shareholders will be delighted with this expenditure.

Off to Boston

AVINASH PERSAUD, one of the highest rated currency analysts in the City, is leaving his job as head of currency research at JP Morgan (formerly UBS) to go to Boston to work for Putnam Investments, one of the oldest and largest money management firms in the US.

Mr Persaud's parents hail from Barbados, while his brother and sister have made equally high-profile careers in the UK. His brother Raj Persaud is the in-house psychiatrist on the daily *This Morning* show with Richard & Judy on TV, and also does a regular column for *Cosmopolitan*.

And their sister Sharda Persaud looks after EMU issues in the research department at Paribas.

Deep trouble

ONE OF THE songwriting trio that brought you hits by Kylie Minogue and Rick Astley in the 1980s is suing London Underground for up to £20m for alleged property damage.

Mike Stock, formerly of Stock Aitken Waterman, claims that tunnelling work for the Jubilee Line extension has damaged the sound insulation of his studio, which sits above the tunnel. According to *The Lawyer* magazine, he is also suing studio designers Munro Associates for an allegedly inadequate design.

Greg Dyke

YESTERDAY I referred to Greg Dyke, a director of Pearson, as a former head of Channel 4. Mr Dyke is in fact a former director of Channel 4 and a former group chief executive of LWT.

If you have any news you wish to share with "People and Business," please e-mail j.willcock@independent.co.uk

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES				
Country	Sterling Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar Spot
UK	1.0000			0.6936
Australia	2.9937	2.9916	2.9894	1.5656
Canada	12.631	12.631	12.631	1.5656
France	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Germany	193.63	193.63	193.63	1.5656
Italy	193.63	193.63	193.63	1.5656
Japan	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Netherlands	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
New Zealand	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Norway	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Portugal	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Spain	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Sweden	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
Switzerland	166.93	166.93	166.93	1.5656
US	1.5656			1.0000

OTHER SPOT RATES					
Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.6568	1.0000	Oman	0.6378	0.3850
Brazil	2.6177	1.5800	Pakistan	84.030	50.177
China	13.716	8.2767	Philippines	63.288	35.200
Czech Rep	51.005	30.768	Poland	5.8409	3.5255
Egypt	5.6442	30.768	Russia	36.051	3.6395
Ghana	12.821	2.3525	South Korea	36.051	233.500
Hong Kong	357.44	21.75	Taiwan	63.458	32.267
India		84.50	Thailand	40.389	36.450
Indonesia	1399.5	0.3031	Turkey	54.408	36.450
Kuwait	0.5022	95.000	UAE	0.6844	3.6725
Nigeria	157.39				

INTEREST RATES				
UK	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Base	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Bank	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Call	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Overnight	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)

MONEY MARKET RATES				
Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months
Base	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Bank	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Call	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)
Overnight	6.00%	Discount	5.25%	Repo (w/c)

LIFE FTSE 100 INDEX OPTION				
Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est. Floor
Long Call	Mar-99	119.31	119.77	119.04
Short Put	Mar-99	119.31	119.77	119.04
Long Put	Mar-99	119.31	119.77	119.04
Short Call	Mar-99	119.31	119.77	119.04

GOLDMAN SACHS COMMODITY INDICES				
Index	Base Date	Last	Chg	% Chg
Crude Oil	1970=100	134.74	-0.38	-0.28
Natural Gas	1970=100	178.44	-4.68	-2.59
Gold	1980=100	44.75	0.73	1.66
Silver	1970=100	127.16	-1.31	-1.02
Platinum	1970=100	156.52	-1.82	-1.16

INDUSTRIAL METALS				
Commodity	Cash	3 month	6 month	12 month
Aluminum	1227.5	1228.5	1228.5	1228.5
Copper	1025	1030	1030	1030
Lead	487.5	488.5	488.5	488.5
Nickel	4350	4360	4360	4360
Zinc	5160	5170	5170	5170

AGRICULTURAL				
Commodity	Cash	3 month	6 month	12 month
Wheat	122.5	122.5	122.5	122.5
Barley	122.5	122.5	122.5	122.5
Maize	122.5	122.5	122.5	122.5
Soybeans	122.5	122.5	122.5	122.5
Corn	122.5	122.5	122.5	122.5

SPORT

'Last season I had to show that I could not just be good in a good situation, I could be good in a bad situation'

Ginola finds love at the Lane



THE BRIAN VINER INTERVIEW

AS EVEN Des Lynam might testify, it is hard to sit next to David Ginola and not feel distressingly uncool. He glides into an Italian restaurant near the Spurs training ground in unfashionable Chigwell, Essex, flirts briefly with waitress and greets me with a crushing handshake.

He orders a pizza quattro formaggi. I follow suit. Ginola eats his with his fingers, expertly, making a neat envelope of each gooey slice. I try to do the same. Pretty soon, my chin is a study in molten cheese. Ginola remains immaculate, naturelement.

He turns 32 next week yet is playing better than ever. Against Wimbledon on Saturday, nobody could touch him, although four times he claimed someone had, and four times was denied a penalty. The verdict on *Match Of The Day* was that Ginola - the divine David - suffers badly from the Sarah Bernhardt. Trevor Brooking even urged Des Lynam to have a word. And Ginola might even listen. "He is fantastic, on and off TV, a great lad, I really enjoy him," says Ginola of Lynam.

'My first touch and the ball stays at my feet. It looks simple, but I work 20 years to get the ball to stick at my feet'

On the Internet, there is a Web page devoted purely to anagrams of David Ginola, and one of them, "O! A diving lad," might have been coined by the Wimbledon manager Joe Kinnear. Just before Saturday's kick-off, Kinnear called to the referee, pointed at Ginola, and made a diving motion. Whatever the rights and wrongs of that burst of psychological warfare, it showed that Kinnear - like every other Premiership manager - is scared stiff of the Frenchman's ability to turn a match in one dazzling moment.

"But it is getting more difficult for me," Ginola says. "It is no longer one player I have to scare off. Now there are two or three. So I must find a solution." He smiles. He wants me to know it is hard work being a genius.

"Some players, they receive the ball and on the first touch it goes one or two yards. So they have to fight to keep it, and people say 'My God, he is working hard. My first touch and the ball stays at my feet. It looks simple. But I work 20 years to get the ball to stick at my feet'."

Of course. But his father was a decent amateur player and young David had uncommon skill even before it was refined at Toulon, Racing Paris, Brest, Paris St-Ger-



Style councillor: David Ginola has been performing so well this season he is already a contender for Player of the Year

Shaun Botterill/Allsport

main, Newcastle and Tottenham. All the same, football very nearly lost out to his other boyhood passion, skiing. "When I was 14 I had to decide between them. I was a very good skier. Now I am not allowed to do it. And anyway, we don't get a break in the winter. It is a shame. It is the best sort of family holiday."

Ah, the family. Ginola's agent, a stern Frenchwoman, has warned me practically on pain of castration not to ask any personal questions. Also, I am on no account to mention "ze Houllier episode," a reference to the present Liverpool manager who, as coach of the French national team, made Ginola a scapegoat for France's failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup. Against Bulgaria, you will recall, Ginola gifted the ball to Kostadinov, who scored the goal

that put France out. As it happens, it is Ginola himself who brings up "ze Houllier episode." And he needs no encouragement to talk about his upbringing.

He grew up just outside St Tropez, where his grandmother was a close friend of Brigitte Bardot. The Ginolas were not particularly well off. Father worked in a factory making torpedoes, mother worked for France-Telecom. He misses the South of France terribly. "I miss the people. I miss the smell of the pine trees. I miss living outside. Here, you live inside. But it is my decision to come here. Nobody pushed me. My mother says to me, 'how is the weather?' and I say 'awful.' So she says, 'David, you must always keep some sunshine in your mind. And we are waiting for you.' They are all

waiting for me. For the little prince to return to his village."

If the White Hart Lane faithful have their way, it will be a lengthy wait. Judging by the roar that greets his name when the team is announced, Ginola is every inch the favourite that Kinsman, Gascoigne and Hoddle were. "That's true," says Niy's blue-eyed boy. "But at first they were asking a lot of questions. I have had to build the love of the fans. Last season I had to show that I could not just be good in a good situation, I could also be good in a bad situation."

The bad situation has retreated now that George Graham has returned to north London, and Ginola is keen to stress how much he and the manager respect each other. When Graham's appointment was

unveiled, some said Ginola would soon be waving *adieu*. Ginola gives a contemptuous, very Gallic "psh." The first thing Graham told him, he says, was to ignore such speculation.

"And now he tells me that in the last 30 yards I can do whatever I want. But he also teaches me this," Ginola clenches a fist. "To be strong. To have force. It is important for me to know a manager can take me to the top. He can. Christian Gross was not strong enough. Also, he was alone. He needed people with him from his own country. Look at Arsene Wenger. He has French people everywhere at Highbury."

Ginola is on good terms with most of Arsenal's French contingent - lunch is interrupted while he takes a call on his mobile phone from Emmanuel Petit's wife. But like

other sublimely gifted footballers, he has few soulmates in the game. Conversely, there are plenty with whom he does not see eye to eye. His enmity with Arsenal's Lee Dixon dates back to his days at Paris St-Germain. And, as he euphemistically puts it, "I do not share the same point of view with Alan Shearer."

When Spurs played Newcastle and Shearer fouled Ginola, "I got up and told him he was too great a player to have to do that." Needless to say, the backhanded compliment was not graciously received. "Alan gets very frustrated when he doesn't score, when he doesn't get so many balls," adds Ginola. "He will kick out. It wasn't me on purpose."

Ginola, of course, was once the toast of St James' Park himself, and his sweetest footballing memory

remains Newcastle's 5-0 Premiership demolition of Manchester United. But it might never have happened if Johan Cruyff had taken him from PSG to Barcelona. "I talked to Cruyff at his home after a game of golf with him. Imagine. When I was a boy Cruyff, with Platini, was my idol. And he said he wanted me in his squad, but he asked me to wait until Hagi was sold. I waited and waited and waited. Then Newcastle came in and Eric [Cantona] had told me it was fantastic playing in England, so..."

So Ginola went to Tyneside, but felt betrayed when Kevin Keegan left shortly after persuading him to reject another approach from Barcelona, this time from Bobby Robson. "I have always had this dream of Barcelona, but Keegan said 'don't go' and now he was leaving." He did not hit it off with Keegan's successor, Kenny Dalglish - "I need to be loved, I need affection, Dalglish did not even talk to me" - and in July 1997 was sold. Absurd as it seems now, only Gerry Francis at Spurs was prepared to meet Newcastle's £2m asking price.

This season, Ginola has been playing so well he is an early contender for the Player of the Year award. And yet he dismisses his chances of getting back into the French team. "It is a young team. I don't think so." Obviously he was overjoyed, I say, when France won the World Cup, but was his happiness tempered with regret that he was not part of the team? That, at any rate, is my intended question, but Ginola interrupts.

"What? Overjoyed? No, it was awful. Awful. They stole my dream! After the game, I was at the top of the stadium with Gary Lineker and Ally McCoist, and I was very quiet. They said there was a BBC party, but I went

'My boy is seven. He is not bad at football but he is better at golf. I will encourage him to be in an individual sport'

back to my hotel and stayed there. Everyone was outside enjoying themselves. I was in my room watching TV. It was awful. Why? WHY?"

I have no answer to the considerable conundrum of why Ginola and before him Eric Cantona were ditched by France, and I dare not bring up ze Houllier episode. Instead, I ask whether he will stay in football when he retires as a player. He has, after all, other job options, as an anti-landmines campaigner, a model for L'Oréal shampoo, not to mention broadcasting. There is a long pause. "I don't know. I don't think I will be a manager. I don't think I will be able to compromise with players. But you never know. I have had some film scripts. I have had one from [the great Spanish director] Almodovar. So maybe I will try that."

"You know, my boy is seven. He is not bad at football but he is better at golf. I will encourage him to be in an individual sport. That way, you win as yourself, you lose as yourself. With my mentality, it would have been better for me," Ginola shrugs. "In France against Bulgaria, there were 11 of us playing, but it was my fault." I say that I was told not to mention France v Bulgaria. He smiles. "It is OK now," he says.

The lady doth protest too much

Sir: I read with incredulity Ms Sue Donato's letter about the "crisis" at Crystal Palace (13 January). The Eagles are a club with a notoriously fickle following who realistically cannot hope to support a premiership side on their attendances. As for her comment about being "long suffering", long suffering is supporting Brighton or Hull City or any one of a dozen clubs struggling to survive in the lower reaches of the Football League.

Clubs such as Palace cannot hope to hang on to genuinely good players although how Jansen can be described as such after only half a season in the top flight is beyond me. £4m for a player who hasn't played international football, and is hardly setting the First Division alight this season, is a vastly inflated figure and Palace were well advised to take the money and run. As they did with Wright, Armstrong and Southgate before him.

It is precisely this sort of uneducated fan that forces clubs such as Palace to get "ideas above their station" and leads them into financial difficulties. Lombardo, Padovano

and Brolin spring to mind as signings that cannot be sustained by a small club such as this.
N J BALDWIN
Brighton

Dirty teams should play short-handed

Sir: If football's powers that be are genuinely determined to stamp out foul play, the solution seems simple.

If a team has a player suspended for a game then it should have to play that game with 10 players. If it has two players suspended, it should turn out with nine players and so on.

Managers would soon learn to place a premium on players who can play the game AND keep it clean. A side benefit for the fans might be to see an 11-man Middlesbrough or Derby side have a clean game against a seven-man Arsenal. Could be fun.
HUGH CRONIN,
Ystradmeurig, Dyfed

Spin doctors from the upper house

Sir: We should have sent a bevy of Law Lords over to Australia to supervise the recent Ashes series. Every time the coin came down on a side that looked unfavourable to England, they could have asked for a re-spin. When at last it looked promising they could have asked for play to commence. If still it looked as if we might lose, they could have asked for the umpire's finger to be chopped off.
PETER PORTEOUS,
Chichester, West Sussex

Chaos would follow from OFT victory

Sir: I refer to your Leader "Football will win if we defeat this cartel" (12 January). The direct consequence of your preferred outcome to the Office of Fair Trading case would be

contractual chaos followed by a BSkyB league of a dozen selected teams and the demise of the Football Association. You think there would be every opportunity then to redistribute broadcasting income?

The sport's governing bodies are exactly the right entities to negotiate broadcasting deals for the sport because individual clubs have no product to sell except their team shirts and mugs. The "product" is football matches in the context of league and cup competitions, in the context of promotions, relegations and trophies.

Individual teams' popularity would not survive long out of this context; they would quickly go the way of the Harlem Globetrotters. If you are worried about the dominance of rich clubs, you should perhaps ask Manchester United fans what they care about most - the fact that they are the richest club in the country, or the fact that their trophy cabinet is bare.
P KELLY,
Burton-in-Kendal, Cumbria

TV would gain from club-by-club deals

Sir: In the current case involving the OFT and the Premier League I am inclined to side with the Sports Minister, Tony Banks, and the Football Task Force led by David Mellor. They claim that the OFT may upset a beneficial arrangement if it rules against the current contracts between the Premier League and TV companies. They could be right but I'm afraid that either way it will be the ordinary fans who lose out, as usual, and the TV companies will win.

Time was when football matches were played on Saturday afternoons, weekday evenings and the occasional Bank Holiday; fans packed on to crowded terraces. Now all-seater grounds provide less accommodation. It is difficult to get match tickets - even if you can afford them - and fans have to suffer erratic scheduling for the benefit of TV. I am a season ticket

holder and attend home League fixtures at Anfield. But although I can obtain a ticket for the Cup tie between Manchester United and Liverpool this weekend, I cannot go because it is on a Sunday - at 12 noon.

Victory for the OFT will mean further confusion, further disruption of match-scheduling and the introduction of Pay-per-view TV (which seems inevitable anyway). I can't afford Sky and although I enjoy watching a match in the pub, where the atmosphere is often like that on the terraces of old, Pay-per-view will further reduce this opportunity. The loyal fans seem to be the last people to be considered today and the football moguls are not the only ones to get it wrong. The recent enthronement of the new Bishop of Liverpool was scheduled on a Saturday afternoon at 3pm. In Liverpool, in "Football City", which just goes to show that the Church is equally out of touch with reality.
REV GRAHAM BEARDSLEY
Holy Spirit Warrage, Liverpool

Never mind 2000, let's turn clock back

Sir: I believe that almost all the changes made in football over the last decade - the Premier League, the Taylor Report, Sky - have been for the worse. While I have nothing against the players making more money, it seems that the more money poured into the game, the lower the quality of the product we get in return. Yes, I would like to turn the clock back to the days of bigger crowds standing on terraces. I would also like to see the entire league programme played on Saturday afternoons again.
MARK TAHA
London

Good luck to Smith

Sir: What a delight to see Steve Smith back in training after his injury (14 January). Like most field athletes, his hard work and dedication go largely unrecognised. But throughout his period of recovery he has maintained his Liverpool humour and kept a positive outlook. Here's hoping the 2000 Olympics in Sydney will reward all his years of hard work.
GERARD HUNT
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire

Post letters to Sports Desk at 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number. Faxes to 0171 293 2894 or e-mail to sport@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Cricket: Authorities are desperately slow to act as a region's premier sport hurtles towards terminal decline

Time running out for W Indies

Caribbean laments fall of its heroes

BY TONY COZIER
in Johannesburg

THE CHICKENS - and, in light of the recent surrenders, it is not an inappropriate analogy - have come home to roost for West Indies cricket.

The signposts along the way to the humiliation of the 5-0 whitewash in South Africa were plentiful and distinct. Yet the West Indies Cricket Board, its members fearful of upsetting their own insular constituencies and divided among themselves, took no heed of them.

After the fifth Test defeat on Monday, the captain, Brian Lara, blamed, among other things, the lowering standards of domestic cricket in the Caribbean. But they are certainly no lower than in New Zealand, Sri Lanka or Zimbabwe and cannot possibly explain why a team including Lara himself, a record-breaking batsman of rare gifts, Carl Hooper, a quality all-rounder of great experience, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, the left-hander with a Test batting average of over 40, and two great fast bowlers, Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose, with over 700 Test wickets between them, should have been so thoroughly trounced in their last eight Tests overseas - three in Pakistan late in 1997 and now five here.

The more credible reason is the blatant lack of discipline that has been allowed to go unchecked and has become deep-rooted in the team and its performances. How quickly, and effectively, the Board deals with it will determine how quickly the West Indies can recover from the psychological blows it has taken over the past four years.

That means making difficult decisions, about the structure of the team, about star players who have repeatedly performed below their best and, not least, about whether Lara, so frequently the centre of controversy and disciplinary action, is the leader the situation demands.

Time is short. The Australians, even stronger and more unforgiving than the South Africans, arrive in the Caribbean in a month's time for a series for four Tests and seven one-day internationals. Another débacle, on home soil, would further undermine a cherished institution already losing some of its passionate popularity in the Caribbean.

It is finding stiff competition as football, with role models like Dwight Yorke and Jamaica's 'Reggae Boys', gets stronger, as American sport infiltrates through the omnipresent satellite television and as traditional lifestyles become more sophisticated.

Hansie Cronje, the triumphant South African captain, partly credited his team's revival after their upsetting loss in England last summer to the strong and swift action of their Board who called in the team and "let us know it was time we players realised the responsibility of wearing the green and gold of your country... for they felt there were times that we really could have done a little bit better."

The West Indian boot was on the other foot. It was the play-



Ridley Jacobs leaves the field as South Africa's Jacques Kallis (right) and Herschelle Gibbs celebrate sending West Indies to their first 5-0 Test series defeat on Monday AFP

ers who summoned the Board to Heathrow Airport in November where they flexed their muscles with their demands that placed this politically significant tour in jeopardy. The upshot was that they asserted their own control here everywhere but on the field.

Throughout the series, it was obvious they had not trained as hard as they should and that, as with Andy Roberts before him, Malcolm Marshall's advice as coach was being ignored. Several of the players were clearly overweight, the fielding bore no comparison to the brilliant South Africans and the indiscipline was reflected in poor shot selection, howling repeatedly too short for the conditions and a clutch of schoolboyish run-outs.

Such developments should come as no surprise. As far back as 1982, well before the West Indies' proud record of 15 invincible years was ended, Malcolm Marshall, still one of the finest fast bowlers in the game, quit prematurely. He could sense the coming danger

and warned in a newspaper interview: "Everything seems to be going down the drain. There is no respect, no manners."

His assertion was clear from the behaviour of several of the most prominent players. Yet, when the coach of the time, the former captain Rohan Kanhai, reported to the Board that some had no respect for him and had verbally abused him in

advice and revealed that he actually had to cajole the team to take the field after a break in play in a Test against Australia.

The upheavals within the team in England in 1995, when Lara, even then coveting the captaincy, mounted an unsuccessful campaign against then captain, Richie Richardson, and left the team in a huff, and in the World Cup the following

year when Richardson eventually resigned under pressure and the hapless Roberts was sacked as coach, were further clues that the cancer was spreading.

It obviously needed urgent surgery but the Board did nothing. Instead, it was divided by internal squabbling.

At the height of another undermining furore last year fol-

lowing the Board's rejection of the selectors' recommendation that the incumbent Walsh should be replaced as captain by the Trinidadian Lara, the

Trinidad and Tobago Board, one of its affiliate members, charged that there was "a calculated plot to tarnish the image and international reputation using Brian's past indiscretions as the basis for sowing

It has been embarrassed by one administrative fiasco after another, causing it a loss of public respect and confidence. It recalled Clive Lloyd, the universally respected captain of the invincibles of the 1980s, as manager but gave him terms of reference that have left his talents underutilised and openly frustrated that he has not been allowed to be more involved.

Its efforts to improve its relations with the players, mainly through a US\$150,000 (190,000) grant to the formation of a permanent players' association headquarters, have been shattered by recent events.

The region's governments have paid only lip-service to much-needed financial support for a sport that has become increasingly more professional and more costly to administer.

And, bowing to public pressure, the WICB appointed to positions of leadership, Lara and Hooper, the two players with the longest disciplinary records against the names. It was a peculiar way of dealing

with an fundamental problem of indiscipline.

In short, West Indies cricket is in turmoil.

Lara claims there are no alternatives to those who have played under him here and it cannot be denied that there is not the available talent that allowed the West Indies to field separate, and successful, teams for Tests as well as for Kerry Packer and the debarred South Africans in the late 1970s and mid 1980s.

But the A team, under the strong leadership of experienced fast bowler Ian Bishop, won its series over its Indian counterpart in India six weeks ago and the solitary individual success in South Africa has been the wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs, at 31 on his first tour and with no previous experience outside the Caribbean.

That should be something for the Board to chew on when it considers the shaky future of a sport that has been so enriched by West Indian excellence and is now devalued by its sorry decline.

"I remember (Clive) Lloyd's team with Viv Richards getting the same kind of treatment as Lara's team after losing to the Australians 5-1 in 1975-76," said Rudder. "After that series, the West Indian team said 'never again', and we dominated cricket for the next 20 years. What is scary about now is that the substance of the Caribbean man is so diminished. I don't know if these youngsters have ever said 'never again'."

The Express editorial also found little hope for the future. "What, then, can be done to prevent an ODI encore?" it asked, under the headline "Between rock bottom and a harder place". Its answer: "Short of finding a Viagra-like pill that will restore lost prowess overnight, the answer, sadly, is nothing."

"And waiting for them is not some healing retreat high up in the Blue Mountains or on the beach at Blanchisseuse but four more taxing Tests and seven onerous ODIs against Mark Taylor's world champions. It is enough to tempt stronger men than captain Lara to retire to the mountain top."

It is finding stiff competition as football, with role models like Dwight Yorke and Jamaica's 'Reggae Boys', gets stronger, as American sport infiltrates through the omnipresent satellite television and as traditional lifestyles become more sophisticated.

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BY CRAIG COZIER
in Barbados

THE WEST INDIES press lambasted their beleaguered cricket team the day after South Africa formalised a 5-0 series sweep with a 351-run trouncing at Centurion on Monday.

"Whitewash!!!" screamed the banner headline on the back page of the *Daily Observer* of Jamaica. "Whitewash!!!" cried the *Daily Nation* of Barbados on its front page yesterday, despite the presence of a general election the next day. The *Barbados Advocate* also preferred the Brian Lara's team's demise to coverage of the election. "SA bury West Indies" and "Worst drubbing in 70 years" were emblazoned across its front page. Its editorial carried the headline "Utter disgrace" and "Time to clean the stables" and was strong in content. "The fault does not lie with [captain] Brian Lara alone... It takes more than the wrong-headedness of this prima donna to sink West Indies to their first ever 0-5 whitewash, a worse defeat than when we first entered the Test arena."

"Too many players went to South Africa with a bad attitude," the editorial stated, referring to the players' strike in November which threatened the tour. "Maximum productivity is always unlikely in an atmosphere of flagrant hostility between employee and employer."

In Trinidad, the effect was similar. "Disunity bowled us out" contended the *Daily Express* on its front page, while the *Guardian* was more sympathetic with "Windies whitewashed" on the back. The *Guardian*, though, carried some depressing sentiments from David Rudder, the composer and performer of the now famous West Indies cricket anthem "Rally Round The West Indies". Rudder, a fervent cricket fan, expressed fear for the future of the region's team in a column titled "What Now, West Indies?"

"I remember (Clive) Lloyd's team with Viv Richards getting the same kind of treatment as Lara's team after losing to the Australians 5-1 in 1975-76," said Rudder. "After that series, the West Indian team said 'never again', and we dominated cricket for the next 20 years. What is scary about now is that the substance of the Caribbean man is so diminished. I don't know if these youngsters have ever said 'never again'."

The Express editorial also found little hope for the future. "What, then, can be done to prevent an ODI encore?" it asked, under the headline "Between rock bottom and a harder place". Its answer: "Short of finding a Viagra-like pill that will restore lost prowess overnight, the answer, sadly, is nothing."

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Its efforts to improve its relations with the players, mainly through a US\$150,000 (190,000) grant to the formation of a permanent players' association headquarters, have been shattered by recent events.

The region's governments have paid only lip-service to much-needed financial support for a sport that has become increasingly more professional and more costly to administer.

And, bowing to public pressure, the WICB appointed to positions of leadership, Lara and Hooper, the two players with the longest disciplinary records against the names. It was a peculiar way of dealing

with an fundamental problem of indiscipline.

In short, West Indies cricket is in turmoil.

Lara claims there are no alternatives to those who have played under him here and it cannot be denied that there is not the available talent that allowed the West Indies to field separate, and successful, teams for Tests as well as for Kerry Packer and the debarred South Africans in the late 1970s and mid 1980s.

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The upheavals within the team in England in

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Bold new Bradford enlivens Elliott

MATTHEW ELLIOTT, the Bradford Bulls coach, believes that his squad for the coming season, spearheaded by the Paul brothers, is stronger than the one that won Super League two years ago. Elliott, who welcomed the former Canberra back row forward David Boyle, as the last element in Bradford's recruitment programme for 1999 yesterday, said: "It's a stronger squad than I've ever had the opportunity to work with and the one I've most enjoyed coaching."

Apart from Henry Paul and Boyle, the Bulls have signed the Australian backs, Nick Zisti and Michael Withers, the Salford centre Scott Naylor, and the young forward, Lee Radford, from Hull to try to reverse last year's relative decline. "Last year we underachieved and we're not going to let that happen again," Elliott said. "Fifth place isn't good enough."

Elliott also insisted that the combination of Robbie and Henry Paul, two players who thrive on an instinctive approach to the game, would not prove too much of a good thing. "I expect them to bring out the best in each other and I've already seen that on the training pitch," he said.

Henry, signed from Wigan in the winter's most intriguing switch, called Bradford's preparations so far "30 per cent better" than at his old club. "I've worked so hard over the last two weeks that I've been shattered at the end of the day," he said.

Bradford, who hope to soon make an announcement about their long-delayed plans to redevelop their ground, have

RUGBY LEAGUE

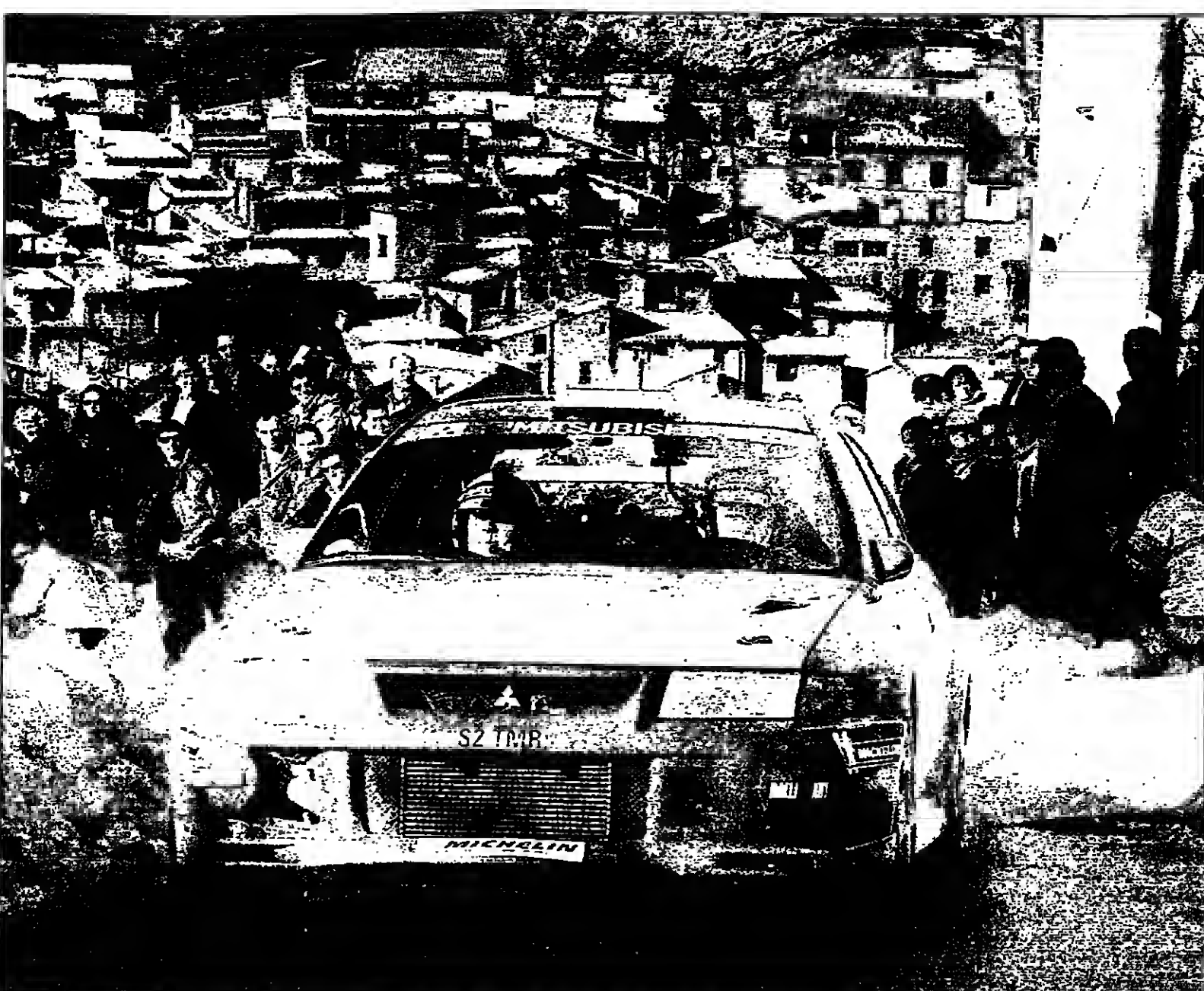
BY DAVE HADFIELD

also clinched a lucrative one-year deal with the kit manufacturers, Asics, to be the club's new main sponsor. The Bulls, who sold an astonishing 20,000 replica shirts in 1998, are keeping their sponsorship options open for the millennium year.

St Helens' biggest new signing, Kevin Iro, will miss Sunday's friendly against Swinton because he has been delayed in New Zealand by an accident to his daughter.

Doncaster, struggling at the foot of the Second Division last season, and almost closed down during the winter, have announced the signing of seven experienced players, headed by the former Great Britain captain, Garry Schofield, as they set out to revitalise the club. The others are headed by the New Zealander Guy Adams, and the French Under-21 international Sebastien Bouche. Graham Southernwood, Stuart Flowers, Lee Maher and Darren Summerhill have also joined the club while the Papua New Guinea centre, John Okai, has resigned, and the capture of Schofield, who has been playing rugby union for Aberavon, is the most promising. "It's a new challenge for me and hopefully I can help to put Doncaster back on the rugby league map," said the 33-year-old former Hull and Leeds player, who was sacked as coach of Huddersfield last July.

The new-look side will make its first appearance in the Challenge Cup tie at home to Oldham St Anne's on 31 January.



Tommi Makinen, of Finland, leads the way during the eighth stage of the 67th Monte Carlo Rally yesterday

McRae nears Monte Carlo podium

COLIN McRAE is within sight of a spectacular podium-winning finale to his Ford debut in the Monte Carlo Rally. The 30-year-old was fourth going into the final day of the opening event of the world championship, which the title holder, Tommi Makinen, leads by a huge margin.

But another fastest time on the final special stage propelled the Scottish fier to within 42 seconds of third place. Fellow Briton Richard Burns is 10th overall for Subaru.

McRae, though, is racing under appeal and could lose any

points gained if that appeal fails when it is heard by FIA, the sport's world governing body, in the next few weeks. The water pump on the Ford Focus was deemed illegal just hours before the rally start last Sunday.

McRae said before the rally he hoped for a podium finish, but even he could not have expected going so on his first rally for the team. But McRae, who

set his first fastest times in the final two stages, raised that possibility as he closed in on the Subaru of the four-times world champion, Juha Kankkunen.

He saved his best until last as he went through the 12-mile section as the drivers headed back to Monte Carlo in 15:22 seconds, though it was close with Frenchman Didier Auriol little two seconds slower.

With over a minute in hand on his closest challenger McRae, barring an accident in today's final four special stages, could claim at least three

RALLYING

BY IAN GORDON
in Monte Carlo

Adelaide refused 'bribery demands'

THE COMMONWEALTH Games was drawn into the Olympic bribery controversy yesterday when it was reported in Australia that officials sought scholarships for their children in return for their support for Adelaide's 1998 bid.

Nearly seven years after the Australian city was beaten by Kuala Lumpur for the right to stage the Games, the former Adelaide mayor, Steve Condous, said that officials from three countries asked for incentives.

Condous, who was the president of the Adelaide bid, said the requests were made by officials from Pakistan, Sri Lanka and an African country which he could no longer recall.

"We were asked by certain countries to give incentives to gain their votes," Condous said. "They all wanted us to set up one of their children at Adelaide University and pay for their tuition there. I said I'm sorry, we don't do business like that."

"They (the Commonwealth Games) are no different to

Aura at Open is greatest reward

GOLF

BY ANDY FARRELL

STILL THE most prized title in the game, the Open Championship has been pushed down the league table of the world's richest tournaments despite announcing an increase in prize-money yesterday.

As well as the gold medal and the silver claret jug, this year's winner of the 128th Championship at Carnoustie in July will receive £320,000, out of a total fund of £1.85m.

Mark O'Meara, last year's winner at Royal Birkdale, took home £300,000 and over the last four years, the first prize has risen by over 150 per cent. Indeed, when the Open was last played at Carnoustie in 1975, Tom Watson won £7,500 out of a total purse of £75,000.

The substantial increases in recent years have helped the Open keep pace with its fellow American majors but the Royal and Ancient have decided not to overreact to the huge prize hikes on the US Tour. Thanks to a new television contract, which fortuitously came up for renewal within weeks of Tiger Woods' 12-stroke victory in the 1997 US Masters, purses on the American circuit are expected to double within three years.

This season at least four tour events will have equivalent prize funds to the Open. The three American majors, which have yet to set their 1999 values, will be greater still, and then come the US Players Championship and the US Tour Championship. At the top of the tree are the three World Championship events, each offering a first prize of \$1m (£630,000).

But the R&A are banking on the aura of the Open outweighing monetary allure and in the current holder, O'Meara, they have a champion of the game's most revered title.

"There are so many international players throughout the world," O'Meara said at Birkdale after his victory, "who have risen their game to an incredible level to make it a worldwide game. That's why this championship is recognised throughout the world as a great, great championship. It is incredibly gratifying to know my name is on the trophy. If you look at the names that have won the Open Championship it is a tremendous honour."

But the R&A know that to attract the best players and provide the appropriate reward for what is said to be the most hard-earned victory of all, the prize fund cannot fall behind the game's other big pay-days.

However, the European Tour will use the prize fund for the Open as a ceiling when calculating Ryder Cup points. The points system, which is now based on the Euro equivalent of sterling prize funds, will have a maximum first place value linked to the Open which will come into effect for the three American majors and next month's Andersen Consulting World Matchplay Championship. The move follows representations from players, including Seve Ballesteros, to tour officials last year seeking to limit the advantage of the elite few getting into the big money events where the top pay-out could be as much as 12 times that of a win on the regular European Tour.

Ivan Francescato dies at age of 31

THE ITALIAN centre Ivan Francescato, the youngest son of the country's greatest rugby family, died on Tuesday of a sudden and mysterious illness.

The 31-year-old Benetton Treviso player felt strong pains in his head and chest shortly after returning home after a night out with friends on Monday. He started vomiting violently and died in the early hours of yesterday morning. He had attended a Treviso training session earlier but had not taken part because of a minor knee injury. A spokeswoman for the Italian Rugby Union Federation (FIR) said the cause of death was not known. A post-mortem is due to be held today.

Francescato, the youngest of six brothers, played 38 times for Italy at centre and scrum-half. He made his debut in a World Cup qualifying match against Romania in October 1990 and was voted one of Italy's best players at the World Cup in England the following year. Francescato won his last

RUGBY UNION

full cap in a Test match against South Africa in Bologna in 1997. Shortly afterwards he suffered an injury and dropped out of international contention. But he was returning to the fold and played for the Italy A side against Argentina last November.

"I have no words to say, only tears," said Italy's French coach Georges Coste. "He was pure talent - unpredictable. His way of selling dummies was a nightmare for his opponents. It was his way of doing it and remains his. Unfortunately the unpredictability which characterised his life has followed him to his death."

Francescato was perhaps the most talented of an extraordinary family of rugby players. Three of his brothers - Luigi, Rino and Bruno - also played for Italy. Ivan scored 16 tries for his country, including one on his debut against Romania in October 1990.

Hamed and Warren split

NASEEM HAMED has split with the promoter Frank Warren following the completion of their contract. Hamed had been expected to go his own way since their deal expired following his win over Wayne McCullough in November.

Hamed split with his long-time mentor Brendan Ingle following the McCullough bout and is training in a rival Sheffield gym. He is now expected to negotiate his own individual fight deals, paying top promoters to deliver venues and opponents on a one-off basis.

Paul Ingle has turned down two world title fights and opted to defend his European featherweight title in Scarborough instead. The fighter's promoter, Frank Maloney, and trainer, Steve Pollard, both expressed their surprise at his decision.

Ingle was offered both world title shots last week - one by World Boxing Organisation champion Hamed - but he is not prepared to give up his European belt. Pollard said: "He's got the talent to win a world title but he hasn't got the mind for it."

BOXING

BY MARK STANFORTH

After staying up until 4am to consider his options, Ingle decided to fight the former WBO champion Steve Robinson in front of his home-town fans. Ingle said: "I want to go into my next fight without the slightest doubt in my mind I am doing the right thing. I'm 100 per cent sure I can beat Robinson."

The Hamed option had been favoured by Maloney, who called the purse offer "exceptional" and added: "He would have had everything to gain and nothing to lose."

One alternative, a bout with World Boxing Association champion, Antonio Cermeno, offered by Don King, would have been chief support to Ewender Holyfield v Lennox Lewis in New York. Maloney said: "It is Paul's decision and I respect it. But he has put all his eggs in one basket."

Pollard, too, believes Ingle has chosen the wrong route but insisted he would stand by his man and prepare him for the

fight, which will take place at Scarborough's Spa on 6 March. Pete Reid will challenge Julius Francis for the British and Commonwealth heavyweight titles this month after Danny Williams pulled out through injury. Reid, the former kick-boxer trained by Brendan Ingle in Sheffield, has relinquished a European title shot to meet Francis.

The fight takes place in Bethnal Green on 30 January, on the same bill as Scott Welch's return against Michael Murray. The former WBO heavyweight title challenger Welch is chasing a fight with Herbie Hide. He said: "Having trained and sparred over 100 rounds with Herbie I know his weaknesses. We've had a few set-tos in the past, he is very mouthy and basically I would love a showdown with him."

William Joppy, 28, the WBA world middleweight champion, is in a critical condition in hospital in Maryland after a car crash. Joppy's van was struck by a car as he left a gymnasium and he suffered a fractured back vertebrae and cuts to his head.

VERDICT: China Castle is likely to be at the top of the form on Monday. But it may be worth taking a chance with KING PRIMA, who has progressed with every race on Broadland and has a 60 per cent win record in his last four races (winner, runner-up, third, fourth).

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WOLVERHAMPTON

HYPERION
1.40 Arc 2.10 Abuljood 2.40 Punishment
3.10 Flying Officer 3.40 Socializer (nb)
4.10 BARON DE PICHON (nap)

GOING: Standard STALLS: 71 outside, remainder inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: Made to high usually best.
■ Flarecard, left-hand, out course.
■ Course is N of town on A448, Wolverhampton station on A449.
■ Admission: Club £15, Stand £10, 25 off for CAP members.
■ Diamond Club: Restaurant package prices £17.50 to £35.95 including course and meal. CAR PARK: Free.
■ LEADING TRAINERS: R Hollinshead 41-522 (12.9%), M Johnston 44-220 (16.6%), N Liddon 41-522 (12.9%), P Evans 42-320 (10.5%).
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: S Sanders 43-311 (12.9%), Dean McKinnon 37-233 (12.9%), J Weaver 34-200 (7.9%), O Holland 31-133 (2.9%).
■ FAVOURITES: 221-523 (14.2%), 41-522 (14.2%).
■ UNRULY FIRST TIME: Pappa (240), Weatherly (230), Sharp Edge Boy & Sounds Lucky (victors, 340).

1.40 NETHERTON MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £4,000 added 1m 100yds
1 620-03 ARC (7) M Waring 7.90
2 000-04 BACHANDER (7) M Waring 7.90
3 BRUFF STEAD (14) M Waring 7.90
4 340-04 MANICAL BUNT (22) O'Connell 4.80
5 340-04 PICA'S PAST (17) J Newby 5.90
6 250-04 SAMANTA ONE (14) B W Haggas 4.90
7 SEVEN O SEVEN (8) P Cusack 5.90
8 000-04 SAKI GARDIE (14) J Waring 4.80
9 000-04 SCOTLANDING SOUND (18) S R Bowring 4.80
BETTING: 2-1 Arc, 5-2 Bruff Stead, 3-1 Seven O Seven, 4-1 Manical Bunt, 5-1 Saki Gardie, 16-1 Scotlanding Sound, 25-1 Samanta One, 33-1 Pica's Past.

FORM VERDICT
A good opportunity for ARC to open his account. He finished well after a reminder when he was runner-up to Tropical Beach in handicaps here last year and he has the least Southwell third in his last four races. Bruff Stead shaped with promise when third here a fortnight ago and could be the 9th man down.

2.10 TIPTON CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS F) £2,750 added 1m 4f
1 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
2 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
3 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
4 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
5 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
6 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
7 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
8 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80
9 04-21 ALSAHB (USA) (14) (C) W Mar 8.80

2.40 TOTE STAKES (CLASS C) £10,000 added 1m 4f

1 000-04 PUNISHMENT (22) (C) K Cunningham-Brown 8.10
2 000-04 RANDOM KIDNESS (22) (C) K Cunningham-Brown 8.10
3 000-04 SWAN HUNTER (18) (C) O'Connell 8.10
4 000-04 PAPA (18) (C) O'Connell 8.10
5 000-04 DAMIANO PLAME (22) (C) P Haggas 8.10
6 000-04 DE WARRIOR (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
7 000-04 JAMAICAN FLIGHT (22) (C) P Haggas 8.10
8 000-04 CHINA CASTLE (22) (C) P Haggas 8.10
9 000-04 FAILED TO HIT (14) (C) P Haggas 8.10
10 000-04 RISK (22) (C) P Haggas 8.10
11 000-04 NOKARI (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
12 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
13 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
14 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
15 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
16 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
17 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
18 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
19 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
20 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
21 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10
22 000-04 KING PRIMA (17) (C) P Haggas 8.10

FORM VERDICT
Most of these are not known for their reliability, so hardly a great betting race. ALSAHB thrashed last opposition on his last appearance at this level here and that entitles him to the vote over Abuljood and Pappa.

3.10 DUDLEY STAKES (CLASS C) £9,000 added 6f
1 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
2 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
3 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
4 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
5 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
6 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
7 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
8 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
9 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
10 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
11 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
12 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
13 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
14 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
15 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
16 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
17 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
18 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
19 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
20 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
21 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97
22 000-04 PALMISTE TOUCH (22) (C) J Berry 9.97

FORM VERDICT
Palmetto: Winner from 11b higher on turf at Leicester in Oct and gradually finding form on AW with 5-length win of 8 to West-Africa over 1m1 here last month. Extra 3f should suit and looks tentatively treated on last turf form.

4.10 BIRMINGHAM HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 3f 7y
1 14-30 MISS TAYLOR (14) (C) P Evans 3.7
2 000-04 WEST U THERE (11) (C) R Hollinshead 9.6
3 400-21 BRONVILLE (11) P Haggas 8.5
4 300-21 IMPRESS FLVY (21) J Evans 8.5
5 000-21 BARON DE PICHON (14) (C) N Liddon 9.2
6 000-21 BARRY (18) M S Lamm 8.7
7 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
8 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
9 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
10 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
11 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
12 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
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15 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
16 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
17 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
18 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
19 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
20 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
21 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
22 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0

FORM VERDICT
Money for Light Breeze, who did not shape too badly in better company at Loughborough on his first start for Gary Moore, would be interesting, but the runner with the best recent form is KEEN HANDS, who has been transformed recently by the application of a visor.

5.10 BIRMINGHAM HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 3f 7y
1 14-30 MISS TAYLOR (14) (C) P Evans 3.7
2 000-04 WEST U THERE (11) (C) R Hollinshead 9.6
3 400-21 BRONVILLE (11) P Haggas 8.5
4 300-21 IMPRESS FLVY (21) J Evans 8.5
5 000-21 BARON DE PICHON (14) (C) N Liddon 9.2
6 000-21 BARRY (18) M S Lamm 8.7
7 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
8 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
9 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
10 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
11 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
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17 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
18 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
19 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
20 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
21 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
22 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0

FORM VERDICT
BARON DE PICHON ran well enough over this trip at Southwell to suggest he will cope with a drop back in distance after winning over an extended 1m here a fortnight ago off a mark 50 lower than today. The biggest threat will be Bruff Stead if he stays this trip.

6.10 BIRMINGHAM HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 3f 7y
1 14-30 MISS TAYLOR (14) (C) P Evans 3.7
2 000-04 WEST U THERE (11) (C) R Hollinshead 9.6
3 400-21 BRONVILLE (11) P Haggas 8.5
4 300-21 IMPRESS FLVY (21) J Evans 8.5
5 000-21 BARON DE PICHON (14) (C) N Liddon 9.2
6 000-21 BARRY (18) M S Lamm 8.7
7 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
8 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
9 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
10 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
11 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
12 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
13 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
14 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
15 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
16 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
17 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
18 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
19 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
20 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
21 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0
22 000-21 MISS DOODYBUSINESS (18) C Thomson 7.0

FORM VERDICT
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Carter hits out at Austrian sacking

RAY CARTER has been fired by his Austrian club Oberwart following a dispute which arose when they deducted his wages for the 10 days he spent with the England team for their European Championship games in November and December.

The 26-year-old Carter, who starred on his debut in the win over Denmark in Birmingham, was left out of Oberwart's Saporta Cup quarter-final in Spain last night against Badalona.

"They fired me," said Carter from Austria yesterday. "Other things have been going on at the club, but the situation with England was the biggest part of the problem. They just didn't accept that I was a national team player and they more-or-less gave me an ultimatum. Play for us or play for England. They wanted me to fly back between the games at home to Denmark, then away to Spain and the Ukraine before we played our final match in Kiev."

Although Carter's row with

the club began on his return from the England programme in December, Oberwart have been in dispute with most of their squad since the first-leg game against Badalona two weeks ago. "They were threatening to fine us because we hadn't played the way they wanted. It was ridiculous," Carter said.

Carter is one of nine members of the current England team playing with Continental clubs and illustrates the marketability of English players post-Bosman. He is represented by an agent in every basketball-playing European country and they were already making calls for him yesterday.

In the United States, Scottie Pippen is set to follow Michael Jordan and quit the NBA champions, Chicago Bulls. The six-times title winner is likely to be traded to the Houston Rockets.

Australian Open: Former world No 1 joins Britain's No 2 in call for greater vigilance in the fight against drugs

Courier reveals blood-doping fears

THE AMERICAN Jim Courier prompted a new doping row in men's tennis yesterday by claiming that only drug cheats could survive the gruelling season.

As the Australian Open champion, Petr Korda, began his title defence after escaping a one-year ban for steroid use, the former world No 1 said he was more concerned about blood doping in the sport than steroids. "I'm much more inclined to have a concern for something that we cannot test

BY SONALI PAUL
in Melbourne

for under the current system of testing, which is blood doping," Courier told a news conference.

Blood doping, involving blood transfusions to boost an athlete's crucial red cell count, is usually linked to endurance sports such as cycling and cross-country skiing.

Britain's Greg Rusedski joined in the debate by saying he is prepared to see prize

money reduced so the tennis world can crack down on drug abusers. Rusedski said: "I think tennis should take a stance and make all the players take a blood test three or four times a year. That's the only way you can trace it, and I'd be happy to have the money to fund it taken out of our prize-money."

Courier, 28 and winner of four Grand Slam titles, said he was unable to perform at his peak throughout the year and doubted other players could. "I can't play 35 weeks a year; God

knows how many matches, and keep going," he said. "I just can't do it, and I don't think anybody else can either. But they are."

"From what I've deduced there may be some suspicious things going on that I'm unaware of and that are not being properly sourced out through our testing," he said.

The allegation met with a mixed response among his fellow players. The Austrian baseliner Thomas Muster retorted: "I am 32 years old. I am still

playing, and I am not taking drugs, and I am still playing maybe 30 weeks a year, as much as I like. I think we are pretty much on the edge of destroying the sport by making comments like that. If you don't have proof you shouldn't say things like this."

By increasing their haemoglobin levels, blood dopers are able to process more oxygen during their exertions. There are currently no blood tests used to prevent it, although the International Olympic Commit-

tee is hoping to introduce one before the Sydney 2000 Games.

"It's clearly prevalent in European sports and most of our tour is in Europe," Courier said. "By deduction - and I'm throwing darts, I have no proof, I can't name names, I wouldn't bother naming names - it just seems a logical way for a player to improve," he said.

Rusedski, meanwhile, is more concerned about high-tech drugs. "I think it would be great if we had blood tests every year, three, four times a

year, because the problems are EPO and growth hormone and stuff like that," he said.

Andre Agassi was quick to play down the blood doping debate. "I have absolutely no knowledge of anyone blood-doping whatsoever," said Agassi, who is back in the top 10 after crashing to 122 two years ago.

Courier and Rusedski are the latest players in a long line who have reacted to the Korda case. A number of them are against the lenient treatment he

received after testing positive for the steroid mesterolone at Wimbledon last year. The 30-year-old Czech faced a minimum one-year ban for steroid use, but escaped with a fine and loss of points after telling an International Tennis Federation panel that he had not knowingly taken the drug. The ITF is appealing against the panel's decision.

"I don't think anyone here or in the locker-room... will disagree when I say that if you test positive for steroids, you should be out of the game," Courier said.

Rusedski's back injury clouds win

GREG RUSEDSKI is keeping his fingers crossed that a back problem does not flare up again at the Australian Open. Rusedski, the No 8 seed, was to be found flat out on the court receiving treatment during the second set of his first-round match with the Australian Scott Draper yesterday.

However, he climbed off the rubber to win 7-6, 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 and, having seen off the world No 46, next plays the 187th-ranked Paul Goldstein, an American qualifier.

Petr Korda, whose participation here was in doubt following the furore over his positive Wimbledon drugs test, prevailed yesterday - although his opponent refused to shake hands. Korda declined to comment after his five-set win over Galo Blanco, which included a third set injury time-out to treat a twisted left ankle. The Spaniard refused to shake Korda's hand at the end, saying he suspected the reigning champion of feigning injury.

Although Rusedski's way forward has been made easier by the absence of Pete Sampras, Marcelo Rios and Goran Ivanisevic, and the early exits of Carlos Moya (seeded four), Albert Costa (12), Cedric Pioline (13) and Thomas Johansson (16), there are other hurdles still to cross. The resurgent Andre Agassi is in Rusedski's half of the draw and the Las Vegas looked in ominously good form yesterday in beating the Argentinean Hernan Gumeny for the loss of only three games.

Rusedski's immediate concern, though, is that his back injury does not worsen. "I did it about four days ago practising," he said. "But I am sure it will be fine for the rest of the tournament. It's just muscle tension - nothing serious."

The 25-year-old took the first set tie-break, but after stretching for the smash which won him the set, his back began to restrict him seriously, and he called for the trainer after losing his opening service game to love in the second set.

There were other slight

BY DERRICK WHYTE
in Melbourne

problems for the British No 2 during the match - an over-excited ball-boy and a noisy postman.

"The boy nearly hit me in the head tossing a ball to me and I asked him if he could take it easy a little bit - it was not a big deal," he said. As for the postman, Rusedski added: "Some absolutely crazy guy screamed out during the match. I know him pretty well. He's a postman by profession - a very vocal one."

On a disastrous day for Spain, only two of 14 the nation's players remain, including the second seed Alex Corretja, who survived against the Japanese wildcard Takao Suzuki in five sets on Monday. The other Spanish survivor is Julian Alonso, who beat Canada's Sebastien Lareau 6-3, 6-4, 6-2, earning a meeting with Korda.

Carlos Moya, the French Open champion and 1997 runner-up to Sampras in Melbourne, fell 6-7, 6-4, 7-6, 6-3 to the German Nicolas Pietrangeli, saying that he was suffering from the effects of a virus picked up at the Hopman Cup in Perth two weeks ago.

In the women's draw, the former world No 1 Monica Seles kept up her remarkable unbeaten run when she coasted past Tina Krizan 6-1, 6-0 in the first round. Seles, seeded sixth, overcame the Slovakian qualifier in only 40 minutes.

Martina Hingis opened her title defence with the minimum of fuss, scuttling the American Lilia Osterloh 6-1, 6-2.

However, a double-faulting Anna Kournikova just managed to stage off a total collapse. The 17-year-old has seen her service game falter recently and she served 23 double-faults against the American qualifier Jill Craybas. Fortunately for the No 12 seed, her opponent could not capitalise on Kournikova's problems. The Russian held her nerve on the pressure points to scrape into the second round with a 7-6, 7-5 win in a nervous 90 minutes.

There were other slight



Adelaide schoolboy Lleyton Hewitt storms past the Frenchman Cedric Pioline in the first round of the Australian Open yesterday

AP

Teenager Hewitt knocks out Pioline

THE ADELAIDE schoolboy Lleyton Hewitt beat the Frenchman Cedric Pioline 6-3, 6-1, 6-1 in the first round of the Australian Open on Tuesday, writes Philippe Naughton.

The 17-year-old Australian, ranked 161 in the world, had his work cut out after giving Pioline, the world No 15, two break points at 2-3 in the opening set. But he produced two incredible retrieving shots to save the game and went for every ball

from then on. Pioline won only two more games in the match.

Hewitt, a wild card entry, said: "I'm playing like I've got nothing to lose." His skateboarder shorts and reversed cap showed a typically modern approach to the dress rules of tennis, but Hewitt is already building a useful collection of scalps, including Pat Rafter and Andre Agassi.

Last January, Hewitt became the youngest player in the

men's game since Michael Chang to win a professional tournament when he took the hardcourt title in his home town. The victory started Hewitt on an unprecedented climb up the rankings - 609 positions to a year-end 113. In Adelaide two weeks ago, he reached the final and then earned more ranking points when he beat Rafter, the world No 3, in an Australian Open warm-up event in Sydney.

Hewitt said yesterday's victory was by far the most important, and the sweetest, of his short career. He said: "To beat Cedric three, one and one on Centre Court at night is something special. I think it's the best match I've ever played."

Pioline, the former Wimbledon and US Open runner-up, was clearly upset by his defeat and not in the mood to pay compliments. He said: "He played a good match. But I'm not dis-

appointed because he's 17 or 18 or 19, or 42. I just play tennis."

With Spain's Carlos Moya already out, Hewitt has a seed-free path through to the quarter-finals. His second round opponent tomorrow will be the German Tommy Haas, ranked 33. Hewitt added: "I don't think anyone wants to be beaten by a 17-year-old wild card in a Grand Slam so maybe there's a little bit more pressure on them."

Rusedski does not believe it makes his and Tim Henman's task easy, however.

Todd (Martin) is up to 13 in the world and I think Jan Michael Gambill (38th) has beaten Tim every single time they've played.

"Obviously it's going to be a little better than seeing Agassi and Sampras across the net, but it's still going to be a very difficult tie."

Rosy future for Bennett as early promise finally blooms

SINCE THE real world takes time to catch up with the frenzy of media speculation, anyone seeking out the "next Justin Rose" would be better advised to follow the fortunes of one of Rose's past incarnations. Warren Bennett has been there, done that and, unlike the Boy Wonder of Birkdale, has got his tour card for the coming season.

Bennett won the silver medal as low amateur at the Open in 1994. The impact may not have been widespread but the talent had been noted in golfing circles. Sir Michael Bonallack, secretary of the Royal & Ancient, stated Bennett would "win the Open within the next 10 years".

If Bennett disappeared for a

New faces for 1999: A young British golfer is about to justify the hype after a fruitful year. By Andy Farrell

winning five times and earning £21,052, more than double the tally of the runner-up Per Nyman.

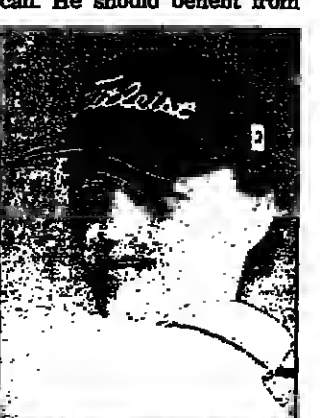
The leading 15 players earned their tour cards but it was Bennett who came away with all the tricks. "It's a great apprenticeship," he said of his experience on the Challenge Tour. "You have to learn how to do it. If you under-perform or just play average, it is not going to happen. You need to contend and to win."

A few friends came over to watch at East Sussex and couldn't believe the standard. They thought the top-35 players would be good but it is not like that any more, it's all the way down the field. When the prize at the end of the year is so good, you are going to get good players."

The prize of a full tour card is one that eluded Rose at the Qualifying School. But the 18-year-old did well enough to

guarantee his place on the Challenge Tour or pick and choose his invitations for the main circuit. Bennett might be an example of how beneficial the first choice can be but he understands if Rose goes for the latter option.

"If he is in the position to gain the invitations, then you have to play on the highest stage you can. He should benefit from



Bennett: Injury setback

those invitations. If I was a sponsor I'd want him there. What Justin did at the Open was unbelievable. He was a good player before that and that made him a household name. Sure, he's good enough to do it. Everyone is waiting for him to do something but just give him a bit of time, he's good enough."

Bennett's father, Peter, a former West Ham player, said something similar four years ago and was still backing up his words at the start of last season when he gave his son a loan to carry on playing. "When I turned pro, my dad said: 'You are probably good enough to do it, but give it some time. It may not happen straight away. It could do, you've got the talent, but it may not.' He was right."

But never did Bennett feel he was failing to live up to anyone's expectations but his own. "Honestly, I've been asked that question a lot and I didn't feel it. I still don't. There were a few articles

here and there but I didn't put that in the expectation category. What Bonallack said was a nice compliment. I only ever looked on it as a positive."

The neck injury, caused by a twisted vertebrae, first struck at the end of 1995. One day the following summer Bennett woke up and could not move. The problems continued through 1997 but have cleared up now he has put some weight on a lean 6ft 4in frame.

More fitness work over the winter, interspersed with a few trips to see Leyton Orient play their own brand of football, should act as a preventative measure. Rather than seek sunnier climes, he has enjoyed a few weeks at home but cannot wait for the year-long odyssey that is the European tour to begin.

"I want to play as much as I can," he said. "Because of my injury I feel I haven't played that much over the last four years. I haven't played a full season yet. I'm looking forward to feeling exhausted at the end of the year."

This is a good time to be a



Fine tuning: 'Seeing Westwood and Clarke winning can only inspire you' Allsport

golfer with big money world championship events being added to the schedule, and in particular a British one. "Seeing people like Lee Westwood and Darren Clarke winning around the world can only inspire you," Bennett said.

"They are at a different level to me but hopefully I can work my way up the ladder."

Taking the view that dealing with the feelings of being in contention over the last few holes is the same whatever level you are at, Bennett is not scared of

aiming for the top of the leaderboard this season. But there are two main priorities. "First, as always, is my health because without that you can't do anything. Then if I can retain my card early on, that security will settle me down."

NEW PUPILS FOR VENETIA P25 ● AUSTRALIA'S TENNIS WONDERBOY P26

WHO WOULD have thought it? In the biggest shock to hit rugby since New Zealand beat Japan in the 1996 World Cup – the All Blacks sneaked a tight game 145-17 – England were last night re-admitted to the Five Nations championship after a whole 24 hours in the wilderness. The sport's governing classes could sleep soundly in their beds once more, safe in the knowledge that their astonishing ability to make Fred Karno's Army look like the SAS remained undiminished.

The entirely predictable conclusion to this latest pseudo-political charade came when Allan Hosie, the Scottish chairman of the Five Nations committee, emerged from a fireside meeting in a Glasgow pub to trumpet an agreement thrashed out with Brian Baister, the chairman of the Rugby Football Union, and Bill Beaumont, the former England Grand Slam captain, who was drafted in to play the honest broker role. But while Hosie and Beaumont spoke of their "d-light" at reaching a solution, others were counting the cost of another desperately damaging episode in the short but chaotic history of professional union.

Revered, rugged figures queued up to pour scorn on a body of administrators now thoroughly discredited: Rob Andrew, the former England outside-half, described the events of the last few days as "staggering" while Gavin Hastings, who captained both Scotland and the Lions, said he was "sickened" by this latest outbreak of brinksmanship. Serge Blanco, the great French full back who is fast emerging as one of the most influential figures in European rugby, spoke of his "disbelief" at the breakdown between England and their Celtic neighbours.

Despite yesterday's hastily concocted deal, the critics will hardly have been reassured

by the conflicting statements issued by the two sides. While Hossie was insisting that the RFU had agreed "unequivocally" to abide by the terms of the 1986 Five Nations Accord on the division of television monies, the document at the heart of the dispute, the power-brokers of Twickenham were equally adamant that their worries over the small print would be fully addressed. "We are pleased that this agreement has been reached and that we can now begin discussions on our concerns regarding the accord," said Francis Baron, the RFU's chief executive.

As the dust settled on a day of frenzied diplomatic activity it became clear that the sponsors of the championship, Lloyds TSB, had succeeded in hanging together a few heads. Furious senior company representatives met Roger Pickering, the Five Nations chief executive, in London and made it abundantly clear that their existing deal was very much at risk. Not surprisingly, the potential loss of £12 million concentrated rugby minds wonderfully.

Even though the RFU has agreed that Arthur Harverd, an independent valuer appointed by the Law Society,

can now begin his long-delayed investigation into the distribution of the millions of pounds generated by the most popular annual championship in world sport, the tournament is not yet out of the woods. Twickenham's commercial hard-liners, led by Baron, are deeply suspicious of the terms of an accord signed during a previous management regime and despite their relative wealth – they receive £13 million a year from BSkyB broadcasting rights alone – they are certain to press for a more favourable deal at the forthcoming talks.

In particular, they want to know how much money Italy will bring to the table when the first Six Nations championship is launched next year and, more importantly still, they will demand clarification of the current French position in relation to television cash. Somewhere along the line, France managed to negotiate a cosy little get-out clause allowing them to keep every last franc of their own TV income until 2002. Under the accord, the other Five Nations countries must pool their income.

Even if the independent valuation is accepted by all sides and the money squabbles come to an end, the poison released by this affair is likely to stay in the bloodstream of the northern hemisphere game for a good while yet. Leading RFU figures believe a kangaroo court was in operation in Dublin last Friday, when the expulsion decision was taken without a formal Five Nations committee vote, and still consider themselves the meat in a Celtic sandwich. Only when the Italians come on board next year will they feel less exposed to the whims of Scotland, Wales and Ireland, whose block voting antics were one of the prime causes of the English clubs' boycott of this season's European Cup.

More rugby, page 25



IT IS beginning to look seriously as if England are on a roll. One-day cricket may be a hothouse casino where the wheel of fortune can turn quickly but they have surely stacked up too many winnings to blow it all now. An emphatic seven-wicket victory over Sri Lanka here was their fourth from five matches in the Carlton & United Series and by some distance their most emphatic.

BY STEPHEN BRENKLEY
in Melbourne

Sri Lanka 186
England 189-3
England win by 7 wickets

fectly understandable. But he has bowled his socks off for three months, often without his due reward. He has been nothing short of noble in England's cause and his opening spell yesterday fitted neatly into the routine. He was quick and he gave nothing away and his wickets were earned by a combination of intelligent and incisive bowling.

He had Sanath Jayasuriya

caught low down at point, bowled Romesh Kaluwitharana with a ball of good length which whistled past the outside edge, persuaded Marvan Atapattu to flirt outside the off stump and

to complete the set dispatched a yorker beneath Hashan Tillakaratne's bat. The spell was 4 for 5 in 21 balls and nobody, except the hapless Sri Lankans, would have begrudged him a single one.

Gough refused to set wicket targets at the start of the tour — small wonder since his return of 21 in the Ashes series was scant return for sterling efforts — but he has certainly enhanced his status. He has stayed fit and free of injury for the first time on such a long trip, although not as he wryly observed after this victory, free of pain. This was one of the good nights but that point served to remind what a hard and thankless job fast bowling can be.

At the point Gough took his fourth wicket, Ranatunga shuffled his way to the crease and took in the afternoon air. If he was at all perturbed it was impossible to tell, though maybe he

chewed his gum a bit more quickly. At the crucial landmark of 15 overs the great pinch hitters of the modern game were 27 for 4, Alan Mullally having given Gough splendid new ball support. Ranatunga chewed his gum and stuck out his chest. He treats the freneticism of one-day cricket by making it look as if he is off for a gentle stroll in the park.

He never wastes energy in

running the first one quickly, for instance, unless absolutely necessary. He knows instinctively when there is one and saunters it, probably musing on the meaning of life on the way. When he bats he looks as if he could be anywhere else in the world but a cricket pitch. It is all part of the Arcadia Roadshow, of course. He is alert to every ball and to every trick, though he is not quite as swift on his feet as events were to transpire.

Despite the cride, he and the

young all-rounder Upul Chandana put on 92 in 120 balls. Chandana made his first one-day international fifty but was out immediately after. Ranatunga might have been run out by Gough when he was 57 when the bowler, following up, executed an impeccable left-foot shot that hit the stumps. Ranatunga was adjudged not out but there was to be no escape in the penultimate over when, after facing 105 balls for his 76, he tried to regain his ground after backing up, turned too slowly and found Nasser Hussain's throw rather too quick.

England had the start they required. Nick Knight dashed as usual, Alec Stewart kept his pace. They had shared 52 in 11 utterly untroubled overs when Knight flashed his cut down onto the throat of the last ball. Nuvur *Zoyse's* second over. Stewart clipped the first ball of this third to an effective *Ranata* at short midwicket. But that was as far as it went. Hick and Hussain consolidated once more and although Hussain was stumped by Kalruw *arana* off a beauty from Muttiah *Ellatharan* which came out of the back of the hand when they had put on 62 (the wicket-keeper having muffed an earlier chance from an unreadable leg break) it was all too late. *Crawley* joined Hick (a studied, composed 66 in 71 balls) and England woo at a center with 28 balls left. They do not look like a side ready to cash in their

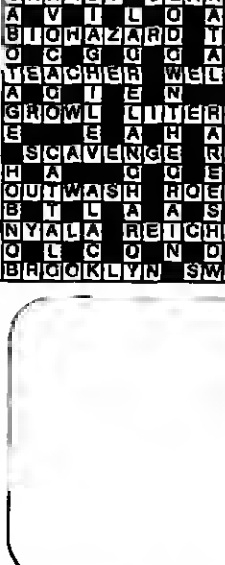
Time running out for West Indies, page 23

No.3824 Wednesday 20 January

1	2	3	4
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Tuesday's Solution

INFORM • VIGILANT



- 1 Risks being left out of
3 s's part of church? (7)
- 5 Source of magnetic
7 storm in torrid holiday
9 resort? (7)
- 11 New morning article
13 concerned with angular
15 functions (15)
- 17 Rambler involved in
19 Karachi herifuffle (5)
- 21 No bigger huffings of
23 soup for 20? (9)
- 25 Make unpredictable Ro-
27 man idea, perhaps (9)
- 29 Grasses blown in the
31 wind (5)
- 33 Attitude of those in trouble
35 (5)
- 37 Following endless com-
39 plaint, tire turns out to
41 be clumsy (9)
- 43 Model, just to provide

21 Better half goes to city,
by and by (5)

22 Stop, possibly, wandering
up mountain track
(11.4)

23 Book store (7)

24 Time of graceful deliveries?
(7)

DOWN

1 One who traps animal,
dear to the French (7)

2 Nether Wallop (1,4,2,3,5)

3 Lads in the stalls (9)

4 Second hood on chimney
has a dirty look (5)

5 Veronica, say, to race expertly
(9)

6 Bottle never broken? (5)

7 Imaginable pale eccentric
with letter not under
cover (7,8)

us slate pieces (7)
13 Come in and settle
down (9)
14 Fragrance of elder
cut up? (9)
15 One who dodges from
quarters (7)
17 Old jailer's name
at heart of theatrical
flop (7)
19 Two-way blade (5)
20 Ravel's dance? (5)

BLACKBURN ROVERS want Liverpool to pay Jason McAteer £1m to leave Anfield. The Rovers manager, Brian Kidd, is hoping to persuade the Republic of Ireland international to move, despite him earning £1.2m per year at Anfield, a figure well above the pay scale at Wood Park.

BY ALAN NEON

run - has not asked for a transfer and is therefore entitled to loyalty money. Blackburn would pay around £18,000 a week and if Liverpool make up for McAteer's drop in pay by giving them a severance sum, the deal could yet be on.

Liverpool are thinking over the idea and may agree as they are picking up a larger fee for McAteer than they expected.

Even with around £1m given back to McAteer, they would still have cleared a sizeable amount from the sale, and removed his wages from their payroll. A £1m pay-off for McAteer would make the leaving of Liverpool more agreeable to the player.

Another Liverpool player

likely to be happier to move is Rob Jones, who will collect £1.1m a year in wages from West Ham when he accepts a move to London. Liverpool will receive just £200,000 for the former England international who

A third Liverpool player, the striker Sean Dundee, rejected a move to the French club Strasbourg yesterday and will instead look for a new club in England. The South African-born German has been told he is not in manager Gerard Houllier's plans.

Ron Atkinson yesterday made his first purchase as the manager of Nottingham Forest, signing the 33-year-old Carlton

Palmer for £1.1m from Southampton.

First Division Portsmouth today face the first of two potentially fatal winding-up orders, three days before playing Leeds in the FA Cup. The first order will be brought against the club by the building company, Fry Build, which is owed £435,000 for work on the ground's Fratton End Stand. The second, more threatening, order will come on 3 February. It has been taken out against Portsmouth by the inland Revenue for £430,000.

WEDNESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

Twenty years ago his star was in the ascendant. Jonathan Aitken mixed with beautiful women, made millions and was tipped to be a future Prime Minister. Today he is disgraced, divorced and facing a lengthy prison sentence. This is the story of the man who lied and lost



A broken man

It was a pleasant evening of good food, fine wine and exquisite company. Jonathan Aitken, 30, successful, handsome and with all the right connections, was charting the future course of his life to a choice selection of his actor friends and chums in the media. Go into business and become fabulously rich, become an MP then a minister and finally prime minister. There were dates for the scaling of each of these peaks. The climb was slower than he anticipated. But 22 years later, in 1994, he was in the Cabinet as chief secretary to the Treasury. He'd made a pile of money from lucrative business deals with Arabs. And he owned properties at home and abroad including a £2m Westminster house, the former London home of Brendan Bracken, where he entertained the likes of Richard Nixon, Margaret Thatcher and Henry Kissinger.

The downfall that followed is almost Shakespearean in its dimensions: here stands a man fatally flawed by his own arrogance. The final act came with his disastrous High Court action against *The Guardian* and Granada TV, and the words that would later come back to haunt him: "the simple sword of truth and the trusty shield of British fair play."

Aitken had sued over a series of serious allegations made about his relationship with wealthy Arabs, including the report that a £1,000 bill for his stay at the Ritz Hotel in Paris in 1993 had been paid by a Saudi contact. Giving evidence, Aitken lied under oath about the payment, inventing roles in the saga for his wife and young daughter. He was found out and humiliated, forced to withdraw his action. The man whose head had been full of great plans at the age of 30 suddenly discovered that he'd lost his credibility as a public figure.

The dreams of greatness are now just cold ashes. But yesterday the man once tipped as a future Tory leader managed to make a mark of sorts in history – as the first former cabinet minister to plead guilty to perjury and perverting the course of justice and, with that, likely to face a lengthy prison sentence.

Aitken is, he says, now broke. The house in Westminster will have to be sold. His marriage, he says, is over. Politically he is a man who is isolated, apart from a small circle of maverick right-wing friends.

What makes Aitken's decline and fall so spectacular is that his background really did suggest he was destined to live and prosper among the elite. He was born into a family from the pages of *Who's Who*. His great-uncle was Lord Beaverbrook, and his grandfather the distinguished colonial civil servant Lord Rugby. His father, Sir William Traven Aitken, was a Conservative MP.

The young Aitken was sent to Eton and then to Christ Church, Oxford, to read law. As an undergraduate he already had access to the corridors of power. Lord Beaverbrook acted as a conduit for the young man while advising him: "You must stir up mischief."

During his summer vacation Aitken worked as a speechwriter for Selwyn Lloyd, Harold Macmillan's chancellor of the exchequer. He built up a good relationship with Macmillan's successor as premier, Sir Alec Douglas Home, and at the age of 20 he was being lined up by Randolph Churchill, the Tory fixer, as a parliamentary candidate. Aitken joined one of the family newspapers, the *Evening Standard*, and soon published his first book, *The Young Meteors*, about the best and brightest of his generation who, he predicted, would rise effortlessly to claim their places as leaders of the country. Those he picked out included Nigel Lawson, David Steel, Norman Lamont, the actors Tom Courteney and Vanessa Redgrave, and Mary Quant.

Aitken saw himself, of course, as one of the meteors and it

all seemed to be going so well. Already he had a blossoming journalistic career and a safe Tory seat was on offer at Thirsk and Malton in North Yorkshire. But then there was the first public manifestation of fundamental character flaws: a tendency towards duplicity and an over-confidence in his ability to control situations and individuals – the very traits that would one day lead to his downfall. Aitken obtained a confidential report on the Nigerian Civil War from Major General Henry Templer Alexander, the father of one of his girlfriends, and sold it to *The Sunday Telegraph*. He then falsely told the general that Sir Hugh Fraser, the Tory MP, had supplied the story. It was Aitken's second betrayal of Fraser, a friend and benefactor. He was already having an affair with the man's wife.

BY KIM SENGUPTA

Publication of the report caused a diplomatic row and Aitken found himself for the first time in the dock at the Old Bailey – in fact, in the same Court Number One where he was to plead guilty yesterday – charged under the Official Secrets Act. He was acquitted after a favourable summing-up from the judge, Mr Justice Caultfield (later to become famous for describing Mary Archer as "fragrant"), but picked up a reputation for untrustworthiness. He lost the Thirsk nomination. Temporarily frustrated in his political ambitions, Aitken turned his attention to money. The Middle East, he decided, was the place where an ambitious young man in a hurry could make his fortune. He started to make contacts among Arab businessmen, and his big break came with a meeting in Paris in 1973 with the Saudi Prince Mohammed bin Fahd. Twenty years later, another visit to Paris and the paying of a hotel bill by his Arab contacts were to lead to the High Court libel action and Aitken's fall.

The Arabian connection made Aitken enormously wealthy, enabling him to launch Aitken Hume International, a £50m financial services group, with his cousin Tim. He also built up investments in defence systems, a Hong Kong trading corporation and TV-AM where, famously, the presenter Anna Ford threw a glass of wine over him at a Chelsea party because she believed he was behind her sacking from the breakfast-time *Roe-up*.

Aitken's political prospects revived when he entered the Commons in 1974 as MP for Thanet East (later the constituency became Thanet South). His right-wing credentials appeared to suit the winds of change blowing through the Conservative Party. He saw himself as one of the new ideologues and began hosting brain-storming dinners. His performance on the back bench was generally well reviewed.

Socially he built up a reputation as a ladies' man, having affairs with, as well as his friend Hugh Fraser's wife Antonia, Adnan Khashoggi's ex-wife Soraya – with whom, he was to discover recently, he had an illegitimate daughter – and Carol Thatcher. Aitken was used to casually discarding what he considered to be spent relationships, but the dumping of Margaret Thatcher's daughter proved costly. Lady Thatcher is said to have remarked that she would be damned if she was going to give a job to a man "who made Carol cry", and Aitken was never given the opportunity to escape the back benches during her term in office. She was also less than pleased when, in a newspaper interview, the brash young MP said of her: "I wouldn't say she is open-minded on the Middle East so much as empty-headed. She probably thinks Sinai is the plural of Simms."

In 1979 Aitken married Lolica Azucki, a Swiss economist born in Yugoslavia. Even here there was an Arab connection. Lolica

was introduced to Aitken by the mother of an Arab aide of Prince Mohammed. Lolica gave him children and outwardly Aitken seemed to settle into domesticity. His busy political and business life was, he said, buttressed by Christianity, and he served as a churchwarden of St Margaret's, Westminster. But, like so much else in his life, this was not the whole story. His affairs continued, including a sado-masochistic one with a prostitute.

Aitken finally made it to ministerial office under John Major, first as defence procurement minister, then as Treasury chief secretary. Through his contacts he boosted British arms sales in the region. In 1994 he was with John Major in Riyadh when the Saudis signed a £5bn deal for Tornado fighter-bombers. Aitken was not slow to take credit for this business, and it also helped to some extent to camouflage his own mysterious dealings with the Saudis. However, as he climbed up the government ladder Aitken was starting to come under increased scrutiny.

His flaw was his arrogance. He didn't think he had to be careful. Was he not, after all, one of the masters of the universe, who could always win against lesser men? He was part of the system, and the system was there for him to use. Thus he took an extreme risk. As a minister, he visited his Saudi friends in Paris and allowed them to pay his hotel bill. Mohamed al-Fayed, in the middle of his vengeful mission against the Conservative government, leaked the story.

When it appeared in print, Aitken sued. He could have settled the action before it got to court, but chose not to. His performance was assured, polished and full of lies. What shocked even some of his friends afterwards was the discovery that he was fully prepared to invent false statements about the role of his wife and teenage daughter in the affair. The High Court defeat brought humiliation and public opprobrium as well as the ominous prospect of a criminal investigation into perjury. Aitken announced that he and Lolica, who had sat beside him day after day in court, were getting divorced.

As the days have gone by, the Aitken story has seen even more twists and turns. First there was Aitken's assertion that many of his assets belonged, in fact, to his wife and her family and thus should go to her as part of the divorce settlement. This also meant, of course, that *The Guardian* and Granada TV, to whom Aitken owed £2m in legal costs, would not be able to get their hands on the cash. Thus when his home in Sandwich, Kent, overlooking the Channel and Royal St George's golf course, was sold for around £500,000 it appeared to belong to a Panamanian company, set up by his wife's grandmother when she had bought the house for him and Lolica. Even the car he uses in London, according to Aitken, belongs to his wife.

Then came his renewed interest in Christianity and an Alpha course (lessons in Christian basics) which he took at Holy Trinity Brompton, in west London. At the same time, efforts were being made to repair his tarnished image. A belated explanation for the Paris visit was touted around Fleet Street and eventually run by *The Daily Telegraph*. He claimed that he'd been on a secret mission for EMG to inform the Saudis about Iranian submarine movements.

This was dismissed by both Saudi and British sources. But the idea that he had been involved in some kind of noble self-sacrifice still lingered among some of his friends. Wait until the court case, they would say, the truth will out.

In court at the Old Bailey yesterday there were, of course, no great revelations. Instead, in a brief, subdued hearing in a cold courtroom, Aitken pleaded guilty and swept away the tatters that were left of his dreams of public life. Aitken's hubris, of course, makes it hard for him to accept this as his own fault.

Even now he sees himself as a great man brought down by lesser mortals. He told a friend recently that he recognised himself in some lines by Andrew Marvell, about Charles the First as he walked towards the scaffold: "He nothing little did or mean upon that memorable scene."

Perhaps a more apt epitaph would be Aitken's own for Richard Nixon, a man he admired so much he wrote his biography *After Watergate*. These, too, are words destined to haunt Aitken: "Even the most generous explanations for his conduct do not bring him exculpation. In his frenzied efforts to fight his way out of the quicksand... he made himself guilty of... deceit, negligence, bad judgement, mendacity, amorality and concealment."

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Send in the troops

Sir: Once more the West feels the need to take action over Kosovo, and rightly so. But this time can we agree that air strikes are not the solution?

It is impossible to punish Milosevic by attacking Yugoslavia with missiles, for he does not care at all what happens to Yugoslavia. Missile attacks only provide more opportunities for anti-Western propaganda, and do nothing to prevent more violence in Kosovo. As for stopping Kosovo Liberation Army killings with missiles, we don't even know where the missiles should be aimed.

By allowing Milosevic to play brinkmanship games with the threat of air assault, we are letting ourselves be distracted from the one viable action we can take - sending in troops. Once we commit ground forces in sufficient numbers to enforce a ceasefire on both sides, we can begin to look for those politicians who genuinely want a peaceful solution to this crisis.

MARK BASSETT
New Malden, Surrey

Sir: I am utterly appalled by the double standards of the Anglo-American-led United Nations Security Council in their contrasting policies regarding Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic. They appear arrogantly contra-suggestible.

On the one hand, where world opinion wants sanctions against Iraq lifted, they drop bombs on innocent Iraqis; and on the other hand, where world opinion demands an end to the murder and mutilation of innocent Albanians in Kosovo, they turn the other cheek.

WILLIAM BURNS
South Queensferry
West Lothian

Sir: Can we really expect Slobodan Milosevic to allow back into Kosovo the war crimes investigators who were sent to fulfil the relevant United Nations resolutions? I think not, when America has admitted its spies worked undercover as part of the UN weapons inspection team in Iraq. Information gathered by the internationally backed team was later used to aid US and British bombing raids.

MICK MCGANN
Southampton

War is no game

Sir: One of the principal arguments put forward by the Ministry of Defence for recruiting 17-year-olds into the armed forces is that they are receptive to the forces' training and ethos ("Ban on soldiers under 18 resisted by Britain and US", 18 January).

This is precisely the reason why guerrilla groups around the world have taken to recruiting or press-ganging 10-year-olds, and precisely why we should not expose impressionable minds to brutalisation. For army training does brutalise - it has to if it is to produce soldiers capable of killing to order. All the more reason then to ensure that those undergoing it are mature and are there from informed choice. Many 17-year-olds still see life as a game, and killing or learning to kill is not a game.

BILL LINTON
London N13

Sir: A major rationale for an international ban on soldiers under 18, which was missing from your article, is the difficulty of ascertaining the true age of young people in many countries.

From Afghanistan to Sudan, war has disrupted the system of birth registration. Without birth certificates, it is impossible to verify the true age of young soldiers who may say they are 16 but could be as young as 12. By encouraging a higher recruitment age of 18, as well as birth registration, we stand a better chance of ensuring that very young children are not recruited either by government or rebel forces.

MARIE STAUNTON
Deputy Director
UNICEF-UK
London WC2

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL and include a daytime telephone number, fax to 0171 293 2056 or e-mail to letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Tough guys No 3: The pressure takes its toll on the hard men taking part in this month's annual Tough Guys race, in Staffordshire

Kalpesh Lathigra

Sir: In your report "Ban on soldiers under 18 resisted by Britain and the US", Save the Children Fund is incorrectly listed among a group of agencies campaigning to raise the UK armed forces recruitment age to 18.

Save the Children Fund believes that war is no place for a child. Worldwide, 300,000 children under 18 years of age - some as young as seven - are estimated to be fighting in armed conflict. Children under the age of 18 should never be involved in combat, and we support current international efforts to achieve this.

However, when effective safeguards are in place to prevent children entering into armed combat, Save the Children believes that 16- and 17-year-olds should be free to join the forces solely for the purposes of training and education. We are therefore urging the UK government to introduce a minimum age for active service in the British armed forces.

MIKE AARONSON
Director General
Save the Children Fund
London SE5

EU's Sir Humphrey

Sir: I beg you to reconsider your idea of directly electing Europe's chief bureaucrat (leading article, 15 January). A future Santer waving a "direct mandate from the people of Europe" in the faces of Council and Parliament would be a sight to behold.

Let us not get bamboozled by the US here. In their original constitution, it was the President's job to be chief bureaucrat - the "executive officer". To make sure the bureaucrat did not become a demagogue, the constitutional founders said he was to be not elected but appointed - by a weighted voting system of the state governments, as the EU Council appoints the President of the Commission today.

When direct election crept into the US system during the early

19th century, it did not exactly encourage a spirit of public service and a humble demeanour. If you really want a future Santer to start thinking he is "the President" instead of the Sir Humphrey he should be, by all means elect him.

Please keep the ideas flowing, though. I am sure I am not the only Europhile applauding your search for better mechanisms. Such as no fixed period of office for the President of the Council or the Commission so the Council can correct an unpopular mistake more quickly and with less embarrassment.

BOB WHITEHOUSE
London N7

Radio Dumb

Sir: The dumbing down of radio (report, 16 January; letters, 19 January) can, in part, be attributed to the studio audiences of so-called comedy programmes. The BBC seems desperate to drag in as many whistlers and whoopers as possible. They'll laugh at almost everything that is said because they understand they have to and because it's better to be safe than

serious. I suggest we need a Humorous Frand Office to investigate this problem immediately.

ROBERT VINCENT
Andover, Hampshire

Sir: What is wrong with Radio Three is not "dumbing down" but far too much chatter during the music programmes, and too many extended trailers for future programmes. At the fifth or sixth repetition of a trailer we switch off and may forget to switch on again later.

ERNEST RUDD
York

Sir: The biggest dumbing down is the over-increasing use of the phrase itself. It is a gross insult to those deprived of the faculty of speech to imply that they are also stupid.

LEN SALEM
London W5

Safe plastic toys

Sir: The British Plastics Federation is fully aware of the Dutch Consensus Group study mentioned in your report "Additive

in toys linked to cancer" (14 January). This study confirmed the safety of phthalate plasticised PVC toys. The results of the co-ordinated studies by the group showed exposure to phthalates from toys in real life chewing situations to be much less than had been supposed by the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment. On 30 November the committee recognised this in revised advice to the European Commission.

The use of PVC in toys in general accounts for a very small proportion of PVC consumption. Other polymers are used in toy applications, such as ABS and polypropylene, which also have good technical and aesthetic qualities. However, PVC in general can't necessarily be substituted by these polymers in PVC toy or baby-care applications.

Neither DEHP nor DINP has been shown to be carcinogenic to humans. The animal studies mentioned were followed by investigations which showed that the mechanism involved in producing the cancer in rats (peroxisome proliferation) was

specific to the biology of rodent species. The same effects were not observed in primates and in 1995 an international symposium of approximately 100 scientists from government agencies, academia and industry supported this conclusion.

The "testicle shrinking" allegation probably follows recent claims that phthalates can mimic the female hormone oestrogen. In fact, studies have recently shown that none of the commercially available phthalates produces oestrogen-like effects.

Some five generations of children around the world have played with, and chewed on, PVC toys and there is no evidence of adverse effects.

PHILIP LAW
British Plastics Federation
London EC2

Greenwich times

Sir: As a former Greenwich resident, Dr Johnson, might have observed, the astonishing thing about the historic clocks at the Royal Observatory is less that their time-keeping is sometimes erratic (*The Weasel*, 16 January) but that so many of them run at all - which they do thanks to our expert staff.

Of course Greenwich is really always "on time", since the Prime Meridian set here defines what time is for most practical purposes. The RO digital master clock registers it accurately, as your amusing piece admits, and the Shepherd electric gate clock repeats it to the public (in GMT all the year round) as it has since 1852.

There are many reasons why our other clocks vary; the "grandfather" in the Octagon Room because its mechanism has been removed; this, one of the original Observatory timekeepers of 1675 by Thomas Tompion, ticks on towards the Millennium on open display nearby.

Dr KRISTEN LIPPINCOTT
Director
Royal Observatory Greenwich

Blair's "sinister religiosity", is simply evidence that the speaker has attended a course on public speaking. Students are advised that in order to make a point stick, it should be repeated three times, each time in a different way.

T J STEVENS
Beddington, Surrey

Sir: Is it not likely that the classic authors pilloried by your featured "reviewers" (18 January) will still be around in a few years' time, when your pundits will have been relegated to footnotes in academic works on self-publishing of the late 1990s?

JOHN HEELAN
Newbury, Berkshire

IN BRIEF

newsletter advertises the *News of the World* for a free books offer. As a GP I am being pressured by the Department of Health to take steps to reduce patients' smoking, yet my journey to the surgery takes me past large billboards advertising the habit. What hope have our children of making sense of such mixed messages?

J. MENAGE
Stratton-on-Avon, Warwickshire

Sir: The habit of stating something three times, seen by Matt Cavanaugh (letter, 13 January) as a sign of Tony

Seen to be done

Sir: In giving his reasons for the setting aside by the Law Lords of the original ruling to deny General Pinochet state immunity, Lord Browne-Wilkinson has restated the fundamental principle that justice "should not only be done but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done".

You report the Lord Chancellor as having emphasised that, in future, judges must disclose links with parties involved in a court case. Judges do, normally, declare links of which they are aware. I recall a case in 1978 before Mr Justice Mustill, later himself a distinguished law lord. He had just been appointed as a judge and it was his first case. I was appearing for the defendants, an airline company being sued for commission claimed in respect of the sale of two second-hand aircraft. My opponent had been opening his case for only a few minutes when Mr Justice Mustill interrupted to say that he thought he should mention that while at the Bar he had appeared once for a man called Martin who was an aircraft broker. At this the plaintiff, to the surprise of all in court, jumped to his feet and said, "Yes, it was you, my Lord."

The judge added that he remembered little about the case except that they went to the Court of Appeal and lost. However, what mattered was that my clients were given the opportunity to ask for a different judge, an opportunity denied to General Pinochet, whether or not his legal team were or should have been aware of Lord Hoffmann's connection with Amnesty. In my case we decided to continue with Mr Justice Mustill and eventually won.

Unless and until he chooses to tell us, the reason for Lord Hoffmann's non-disclosure in the Pinochet case can only be guessed at. What is surely significant, though, is that, at least so far as the House of Lords is concerned, his error was unprecedented. Regrettable and expensive though the incident has been the fact that the House of Lords ordered a rehearing must serve to restore confidence in our highest appeal court.

DAVID J LAMMING
Sudbury, Suffolk

Sir: Your report (16 January) quoting Lord Browne-Wilkinson on the need to demonstrate that "justice should not only be done but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen and done" in the Pinochet appeal is, of course timely as well as appropriate. We should, however, remember the reformulation by Albie Sachs, now a judge in the Constitutional Court in South Africa, who remarked with regard to the apartheid regime of which he was a splendid opponent, that "justice should not only be seen to be done; it should be done". It is to be hoped that the outcome of the Law Lords' deliberations will show that as well.

KENNETH PARKER
London N6

Sir: Should any future case before the Law Lords on the tobacco industry be heard by non-smokers or smokers? I would hope they would both declare their interests, so both could be eliminated from the panel making a judgement.

DAVID LEVITAS
London E17

A useful present

Sir: This is to sons, daughters and grandchildren who bought their mothers their own choice of Christmas presents: brooches, earrings, jumpers, cardigans... the list is endless. Have you thought that your parents would prefer a gift voucher or, even better, cash?

In six telephone calls to friends aged 60- and 70-plus, we all moaned that we wished our families would give us cash. We are grateful that we have families, and for their gifts, but with the cash we could pay for the telephone, water, electricity and gas, or we could buy our own choice of clothes.

Mrs MAUREEN BROPHY
Manchester

Now for the BBC's cost-cutting awards, repeated weekly

IT IS not generally known that leading figures from the five BBC radio stations meet regularly to discuss ways and means of improving broadcasting - or ways and means of pleasing John Birt. Thanks to a mole within the BBC I have secured a transcript of part of the latest meeting and think readers may find it instructive. I have bleeped out bad language wherever it is used by these radio bigwigs.

Radio 3: Well, since it's my turn to take the chair, we may as well start with the traditional ceremony of awarding a prize to the best new cost-cutting exercise. As you know, we're always looking for new ways of repeating programmes without seeming to repeat them, and Radio 4 has come up with a real cracker this week. Radio 4: Have I? Radio

3: You certainly have. Just to set the scene, remember that we try as hard as possible not to do naked repeats. Of course, sometimes we have to. I can't pretend when I repeat *Composer of the Week* that it's anything but a repeat of *Composer of the Week*. Nevertheless, we all know that it's much better to dress repeats up as "Another Chance to Hear..." or "A Tribute to..." or "The Best of..." or "Such and Such Revisited". As you know, last time we gave the prize to Radio 2... Radio 2: Did you? Radio 3: We certainly did. We gave it to your Thursday night feature *Barry Took's Comedy Classics*. Radio 2: Why did you do that? Radio 3: On two counts. First, it sounded as if Barry Took was responsible for writing these revisited classics, whereas he had nothing to do with them. Sec-

ondly, it sounded as if they weren't repeats. I think the word "classic" bids fair to become our code word for "repeat". This week we are giving the prize to a new Radio 4 item called "I'm Sorry I Haven't a Desert Island"... Radio 2: I'm sorry I haven't a what? Radio 3: Yes, stupid title, isn't it? That's part of its charm. The more puzzling a title is, the less the punter is going to realise it's a disguised repeat. The idea is that celebrities are asked to nominate some extract from a past edition of *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* to take to a desert island. So you get someone like Stephen Fry coming on and choosing, or having chosen for them, a bit of an old programme. Which, I need hardly say, is as cheap as John Birt could devoutly wish for. Not only that, but underneath the hilling in Radio

We at Radio 4 take a pride in spreading things as much as possible. I need hardly remind you that when we pretended to bump Melvyn Bragg off *Start the Week* and replace him with Jeremy Paxman, what we were really doing was pushing Bragg to Thursday and getting two *Start the Week*s for the price of one. Radio 1: For the price of two, surely? Radio 4: No. Bragg and Paxman are both repeated cheaply the same day. Anyway, I am very pleased to accept the prize for "I'm Sorry I Haven't a Desert Island"... Radio 1: Hold on, hold on! Before we go dishing out prizes, may I just point out that getting celebrities to nominate old bits of *I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue* is not exactly a cost-cutting exercise. Is Stephen Fry getting paid for this? Radio 4: I'd have to check, but I

can't imagine he is. Stephen is a real sweetie. He'll turn out and endorse the BBC no matter what Radio 2: Hmm... Radio 3: OK, prize awarded. Incidentally, before we leave "I'm Sorry I Haven't a Desert Island", has anyone come up with any new Desert Island twists? Radio 3: And now it's time to get back into the thick of the action, as it happens, where it happens! Radio 3: Sorry, Radio 5? Radio 5: Oh, himey, sorry. I must have nodded off. We have a motto on Radio 5 - if nothing is happening, panic and go into overdrive! Radio 3: Thank you. As I was saying, we are always offering prizes for new twists on the Desert Island notion. Asking some nearly famous person to nominate his favourite records is cheap, cheerful and... well, cheap. We on Radio 3 have pr-

ated the idea on several occasions, as *The Tingle Factor*, as *Private Passions*, and so on. Radio 2: Hold on, we've now got George Melly asking people what their favourite jazz records are on Thursdays, and playing them. Does that count? Radio 3: Mmm... sort of. Jazz people are always pretty boring. Radio 2: Ah, but he's not asking jazz people. He's asking real people, like Kenneth Clarke and Ian Dury! Radio 3: Excellent! Radio 1: To be strictly accurate, you should nominate the whole of Radio 1. The entire output is virtually nothing but people playing their favourite records over and over again...

I'm afraid that's all we have time for. If you'd like a cassette of the full meeting, just send me an SAE and a blank cheque.



MILES KINGTON
This week we're giving the prize to a new Radio 4 item, 'I'm Sorry I Haven't a Desert Island'

Times were those words we all love to see - "Repeated from Monday". Well done, Radio 4! Radio 4: Thank

THE INDEPENDENT

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We must intervene in Kosovo to secure justice for the slain

SERBIAN FORCES may have cleared the bodies from the mosque. They may have succeeded in hiding some of the evidence from international observers. But the implications of the massacre in the town of Racak cannot be cleaned up so easily, for the anger felt around the world has been both heartfelt and genuine.

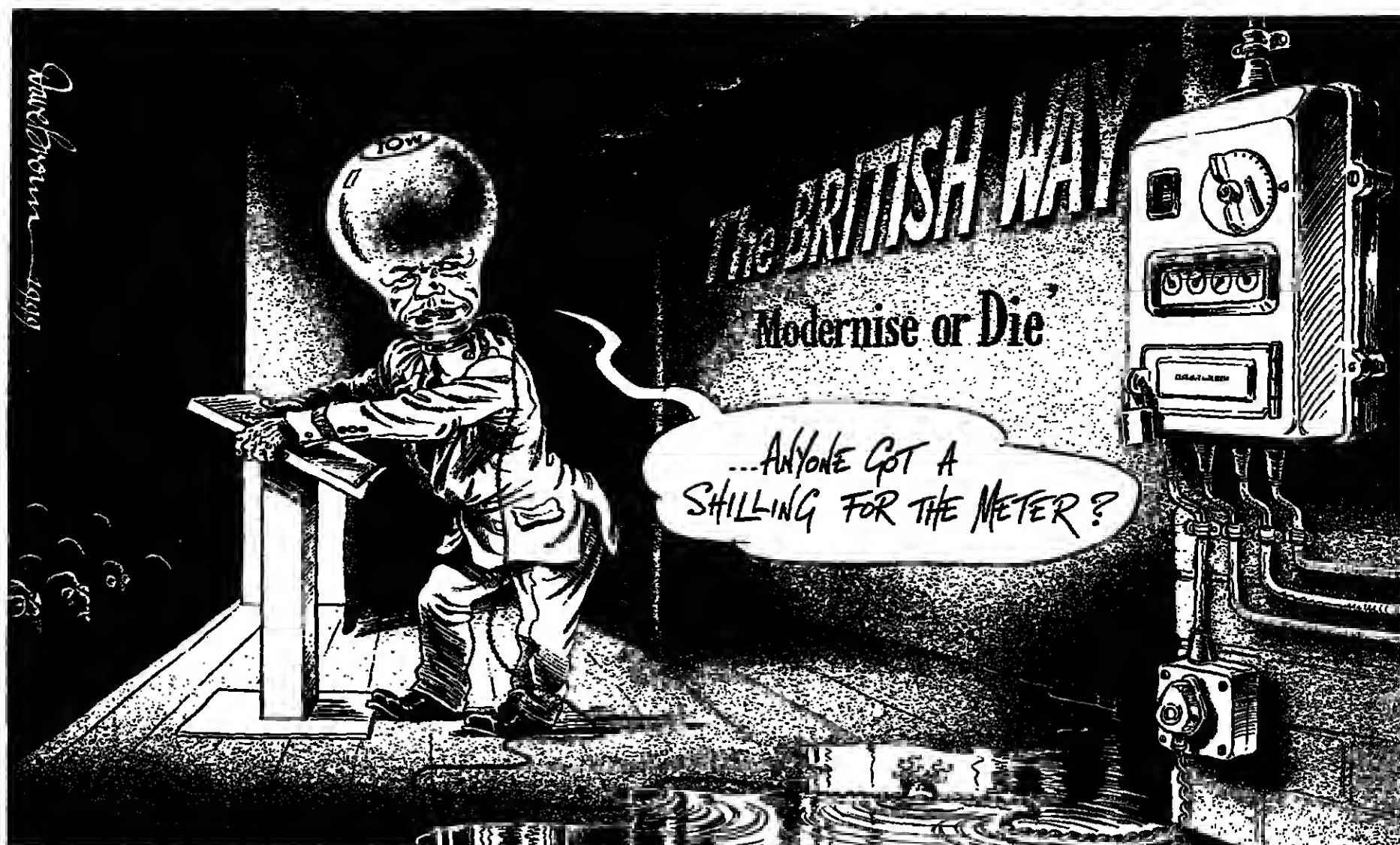
Outrage is justified, but action founded on emotional impulses and nothing else – with no vision of what Nato and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) wish to achieve – will get nowhere. Worse, it could embroil our troops in an endless and thankless police action. OSCE monitors are already exposed to the threat of kidnap or even murder. No more men and women should be risked without the “endgame” that diplomats speak of so fondly but never seem to play.

One aim should be to secure justice for the slain. The murders are an affront to the embryonic system of world justice. Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian President, may have been able to bar Louise Arbour, the war crimes prosecutor, from Racak. He may secure the expulsion of the head of the OSCE verification mission in Kosovo. But the very fact that he thinks these people worthy of notice shows that he recognises their power and influence.

Ms Arbour has already secured a series of convictions in her court in The Hague. The Bosnian Serb criminals, Radovan Karadic and General Ratko Mladic, are locked inside their puny enclave of Republika Srpska by fear of arrest. President Milosevic's record, hitherto spared investigation given his co-operation with the Dayton accord on Bosnia, should now be subjected to the closest scrutiny.

The more pressing dilemma is what to do in terms of military action. The history of Yugoslavia's wars since 1991 is one long demonstration that Serbia's radical nationalists will not yield unless they are staring military defeat in the face. Armed resistance freed Slovenia and Croatia; a string of Croatian victories, combined with Nato action, forced the Serbs to an agreement at Dayton. European foreign ministers, including Robin Cook, talked last October of “final warnings” and secured a ceasefire. Nato generals have now been dispatched to Belgrade to warn that military operation orders have not been rescinded since last year's crises, and can be activated at any time. At least this is an improvement on the West's craven behaviour over Bosnia, though we must hope that the threat of force is being made explicit.

However, we must have a vision of what force will achieve. It seems that nothing can salvage Kosovo's status as an integral part of Serbia. But immediate independence, secured by military force, is no more of an option. It would involve full-scale war with Serbia, an



Monet, money and the envy of our neighbours

THE WORST aspect of the English is their distrust of success. The worst aspect of Brussels is their desire to tax anything that is a success.

Both expressions of envy are on display in the art world at the moment. In London, the tidal wave of bookings for the Monet exhibitions has been greeted not just with joy from the public but with a whine from the aesthetes, claiming it to be a populist sham pandering to the taste for pretty pictures.

In Brussels, meanwhile, a committee is to discuss imposing 2 per cent tax on the resale of an artist's work, to go to the artist or his or her estate, on top of the rise in the VAT on imported art works that is to come into force this summer.

Brussels should be resisted and the British aesthetes ignored. London is at the moment the art capital of Europe, and arguably the world. It sells more art because its dealing costs are considerably lower than on the Continent (hence Paris's desire to see it loaded with more taxes). But it is also the art capital because there is a real sense of huzz and public involvement here.

The art galleries of east London are already being succeeded by a new generation setting up in south London around the Tate's contemporary art premises at Bankside. The success of the Monet show might be held discouraging if it were an excuse for the public to reject modern art in a welter of nostalgic prettiness. But it isn't. In fact there is as much enthusiasm, in relative terms, for the London Contemporary Arts Fair opening today as there is for the portraits by Ingres opening next week.

Whether it is “great” art, we can leave to posterity. What we can celebrate, and defend, is a public that throngs to see art in a city that knows how to promote it, good and bad.

I'm sorry, Mr Hague, but your British Way is another dead end

WILLIAM HAGUE has a lamentably low public profile, so it is not surprising that he wishes to raise it by any possible means. His speech to the Centre for Policy Studies yesterday was the rhetorical equivalent of the rampage on which Michael Douglas embarked in the film *Falling Down*.

You may remember that Mr Douglas played a quiet man of regular habits who loses self-control because no one will listen to him. Mr Hague's thoughts on Britishness were a similarly desperate attempt to make us listen by shouting some startling things very, very loud.

“New Labour is a threat to Britishness,” warned Mr Hague. “Our Prime Minister is a threat to Britain.” Things, apparently, are worse than we thought – a dagger at the heart of what it is to be British. If he is left to carry on unchecked, he will drive it right through that heart.

Mr Blair as the Norman Bates of British identity? Maybe not. The edge of hyperbole in Mr Hague's pronouncements sounds odd from such a reasonable man. The British Way sounds like the title of a speech Oswald Mosley once gave on a wet night in east London to a lot of disgruntled men in home-made black shirts. When the Tory leader first strayed into this soundbite in his conference speech last October, I hoped that it might be a passing fad. Sadly, it was not. He can't be blamed for picking up the theme of Britishness.

It is likely to become one of the dominant themes in political discourse, as the consequences of Scottish devolution, for Scotland, England

and the United Kingdom as a whole, become apparent. But he is unwise to pitch his thoughts on the dangers of devolution and deeper European integration in language that will appeal to crazed nationalists, little Englanders and old men muttering on the top decks of buses. The Conservative Party has enough of those already. It needs to attract cosmopolitan, open-minded people to make its revival.

I know that this is what Mr Hague thinks he is doing. When he defines the Britain of good restaurants, Ricky and Bianca and the Notting Hill Carnival as “urban, sporty, fashion-conscious, multi-ethnic, brassy, self-confident and international”, it is a timely attempt to counter the chimera of a Cool Britannia eternally governed by the centre left.

But both New Labour and the Conservatives hitch their discussions of Britishness to a set of rigid assumptions. In the battle for Britishness, our every habit, tie, joke and insecurity is a weapon. By the time they have finished mauling our sensibilities and analysing what we really mean when we eat fish and chips, we may well conclude that what it means to be British is sharing an irresistible desire to tell our politicians to shut up about it.

There is something dubious about politicians seeking to nail down national identity. Defining what we are is particularly difficult, beyond a desire to live comfortably with overlapping identities and not to force divisions where they do not need to exist. The premises of Mr Hague's particularism, however, is that we are a bloody marvellous mongrel race, slow



ANNE MCELVOY
He is unwise to use language that appeals to crazed nationalists, little Englanders and muttering old men

to anger, quick to make friends and loath to take the state's hand-outs.

Oppositions can afford to entertain these pipe dreams of national character and to suggest that it is only the evil distortions of the Government that prevent us from being damn near perfect. But it is one piece of denial too far for the leader of the Tory Party to speak of the welfare state sapping our vitality and to suggest that all it needs is another he-man to set free the unfettered potential of the long-term unemployed. If it were that easy, the Conservatives would have done it in their 18 years of office.

One of Mr Hague's natural advantages is that he speaks in a plain and forthright manner, a contrast with the woollier parts of New Labour's lexicon. If he concentrated his attacks on the areas where the Government is

weakest – such as the unacknowledged consequences, politically and economically, of precipitate EMU entry – or questioning the cost-effectiveness of the New Deal job creation, he will build up a reputation for puncturing government froth.

If, on the other hand, he plays the tired old game of blaming this government for failing to achieve things the last ones couldn't, we will ignore him some more.

The Tory leader knows that he needs a distinct narrative and one which cannot be co-opted, as so many others have, by the Government. But the British Way is the wrong path to take. New Labour will have little difficulty in responding: it will claim that the Tory vision is backward-looking.

Indeed, this Forest of Arden irrationality and the idea of a Conservative birthright are the legacies in Tory thought of the late Enoch Powell's half-inspired, half-mad musings on Englishness: “Tell us what binds us together; show us the clue that leads throughout a thousand years; whisper to us the secret of this charmed life of England that we in our time may know how to hold it fast.”

It is telling that Powell was obsessed by English particularism, whereas Mr Hague seeks to extend his efforts to the less controversial territory of Britishness. But the Tory party is still trapped by its own logic on constitutional reform.

If devolution is so bad for our collective identity, why are they not committed to reversing it? And what if, despite the warning of “waking up in what feels like another country” (not

such a terrible thought in January), we find that in fact we rather like a more loosely connected United Kingdom? Mr Hague will be seen to have howled in the wilderness by overstating his case.

He has backed away from the original proposal to create an English parliament, leaving only a commitment to “find sensible political outlets for a new-found English consciousness... compatible with our open, multi-ethnic British identity.” I'm afraid that the clumsy attempt to craft a bit of political correctness on to the demand of English nationalists in his party shows up the dangers of Mr Hague's position.

For such a fluent speaker at the dispatch box, Mr Hague's speeches are rather forced affairs, a strange mixture of erudite references to historical works and the causes-of-the-industrial-revolution pull-yourself-up-by-the-bootstraps rhetoric. At such times, he sounds like an unlovely hybrid of precociously opinionated undergraduate and ghost of Norman Tebbit (died 1985).

This is not an accurate reflection of the Tory leader's common sense and pragmatism. But he needs to loosen up. Political speeches are less about what is said than about the projection of a voice. Many of Mr Blair's speeches are slight in content, but he has the knack of sounding both reassuring and challenging. The very worst position for a Tory leader to adopt is one that sounds fearful and resentful of what is happening, yet unable to suggest a calm and credible alternative.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“I would like to be remembered as a good mother”
Madonna,
singer and actor

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Diplomacy without arms is like music without instruments.”
Frederick the Great,
18th century king of Prussia

How much do you love me?



THIS MUCH?

For just £1 a week, you can sponsor an abandoned dog like me today. You'll be helping the National Canine Defence League (NCDL) to give me, or another dog who may never be rehomed, a safe and happy life at one of its Rescue Centres. You'll also help the NCDL to care for other needy dogs. In return, you'll get a sponsor's certificate, updates on your dog – and unconditional love from your new friend. Now, isn't that a pound well spent?

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ALL OF this is completely preventable, if international leaders will only have the wisdom and the courage to apply the lessons of Auschwitz. Stopping genocide is a vital interest to all nations, worth the risk to blood and treasure to halt. And the combined resources of 185 nations are many times more than sufficient to stop a handful of lawless butchers from committing genocide in Kosovo, Bosnia or Rwanda. All that is lacking is the political will to

close the gap between Holocaust Museum rhetoric and decisive international action. It is high time for international leaders to do the right thing. Philadelphia Inquirer

AFTER AMERICAN envoy Richard Holbrooke negotiated the Kosovo ceasefire, some Europeans actually harangued that America hadn't kept them informed. Kosovo offers the Europeans the perfect opportunity to take the

MONITOR

ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
US reaction to the massacre of Kosovan villagers by Serbian security forces

lead. All the more so since the US already has nearly 10,000 troops at risk in Bosnia, where we have no real national interest. As an ally, the US must be prepared to provide logistical and other assistance to the Europeans, but it is their people who ought to go into harm's way in Kosovo – if that is what the alliance decides to do. Chicago Tribune

NATO SHOULD demand that Milosevic immediately end his interference. But there's no chance he will comply if Nato continues rattling its sabre aimlessly. Compelling Milosevic to back down just when he's warming up is likely to take far more than verbal condemnation. It's time to extract from Milosevic something more than promises. If words don't do it, extract it with hardware that he understands. USA Today

EUROPEAN MEMBERS of Nato have made it clear that if US forces decline to join offensive action, they will too. This leaves little chance of resolving the Kosovo crisis any time soon. But to diminish it by diplomacy always will be worth an effort. It's a hard road to Milosevic's house, and one that should not be taken without prospects for an enduring compromise. Nato should holster its guns and press for a deal. LA Times

PANDORA

DID BRITISH intelligence agents use fake opinion polls to drag America into the Second World War? That is the allegation contained in Thomas E. Mahl's book *Desperate Deception*, which tells the story of the British Security Co-ordination (BSC) unit to gain support for US involvement. Prior to Pearl Harbor, a key task of BSC agents was to manufacture bogus public opinion polls showing popular public support for peacetime conscription in the US. A reviewer of Mahl's book, quoted in *The Washington Times*, says that the surveys conducted "were all done under the influence of dedicated interventionists and British intelligence agents". Pandora called the Foreign Office to shed some light on the accusation and patiently awaits a reply.

TONIGHT SEES the launch of Paul Routledge's biography of Peter Mandelson at Politico's bookshop in Westminster. The book, *Mandy*, was reviewed in Monday's *Evening Standard* by Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's former spin doctor and a victim of "Notting Hillgate".

"I can scarcely believe I am writing this review..." says Whelan, opening his piece with a mocking reference to the resignation letter of Mandelson to the Prime Minister. Further, he tells the reader: "When I first got wind of Paul's plans... I asked him not to do it." Tonight Whelan will get the chance to explain to Routledge just how much he regretted the book, as he is confirmed to be attending the Politico's launch.

THE SHOCK Jock: Howard Stern has Rupert Murdoch in his sights. The DJ, who makes his living from abusing anyone he can on his cult radio show, has taken offence at unauthorised photographs of him in the press, a number of which have been run by Murdoch-owned publications. Reports suggest that Stern's revenge is to hire a friend to trail Murdoch wherever he goes. Needless to say, Murdoch's people are not impressed with Stern, whose own stalker was last week sent to prison for two-and-a-half years. Howard Rubenstein, speaking on behalf of Murdoch, told the US press that Stern's man "better be prepared to travel the globe

repeatedly". He'd better like Chinese food, too.

"TO BE perfectly honest, I thought we were doing a load of rubbish." That is what David Prowse, the British actor who starred as the body of Darth Vader (pictured) in the *Star Wars* films, recently told reporters about the original sci-fi saga. When Pandora called Prowse to find out more, the Bristol man set the record straight: "Everybody thought what we were doing was rubbish, even 20th Century Fox, until the special effects were added on."

In fact, Prowse hopes that there may be a chance to reprise his role in the later prequels of *Star Wars* but for now it's his health and fitness studio that occupies him.

"It's called Star Gym because of the famous people that have come here over the years," Prowse told Pandora. "People such as Arnold Schwarzenegger, Albert Finney and Ted Heath. I used to train Heath you know." And the force is certainly still with Ted, that's for sure.

THE WOUNDS inflicted on Mia Farrow when Woody Allen left her for their adopted daughter Soon-Yi still run deep after eight years. Last night on US television Farrow recalled one winter's day when she came home to find Woody keeping their children occupied by throwing his hat and scarf into the fireplace.

"I said: 'What is going on?' and he said: 'Well, we'd run out of stuff to do.'" After recounting the episode Mia laments: "He just didn't have any idea."

PANDORA WOULD like to pass on some information to British students thinking of working for a US congressman. A new guide to recruitment on Capitol Hill by Gary Alpert supplies some useful tips on deciding between a Democrat or a Republican boss. For example, for Drug of Choice it's marijuana for Democrats and Viagra for Republicans; for Best Actress, it's Ingrid Bergman for Democrats and Hillary Rodham Clinton for Republicans. But a special mention must go to the category of Favourite Pin-Up: Pamela Anderson Lee for Democrats and Margaret Thatcher for Republicans. You have been warned.

A toast to champagne socialists



KEN LIVINGSTONE

Working class people are not embarrassed by having too much money; not having enough embarrasses them

AS WELL as the more obvious splits on the British left, there is one enduring schism that has its origins in the English Civil War between Crown and Parliament. The identification of the puritans with the revolution has meant that throughout all succeeding generations of English radicals, there has always been a substantial chunk of the British left who have felt that conspicuous enjoyment of life may in itself be an indicator of closet right-wing leanings.

The destruction of great art and the prescriptions against alcohol, music and dancing created a left-wing puritan tradition that is still alive today.

This schism is not unique to the English left, as anyone who has seen the wonderful film *Danton* will confirm. Gérard Depardieu plays the great French revolutionary Danton locked into a life-and-death struggle with Robespierre for the heart and soul of the revolution. The film brilliantly captures the richness of Danton's life, with good food and wine and a series of relationships with women that we would today feel were rather politically incorrect.

In contrast, Robespierre is a dry, wizened husk sitting in his dilapidated garret endlessly pouring out revolutionary tracts while subsisting on the occasional bowl of miserable gruel. Of course, Robespierre managed to have Danton executed shortly before he went to the guillotine himself, but as he was still a virgin at his own execution, it seems to me that Danton had

much the best of their brief years on planet Earth.

In more recent times, the split was typified by the boring drones of the Militant Tendency - whose key demand was that MPs should "live on a worker's wage" - on the one hand, and Aneurin Bevan, who did more than anyone to improve the conditions of the working class, on the other. But Bevan had no qualms about enjoying life himself, with a fondness for expensive clothes, good food and champagne. The Tory press denounced him as a hypocrite because of his lifestyle. The truth is that working-class people are never embarrassed by having too much money - they are embarrassed by not having enough.

My own parents spent every Sunday afternoon of my childhood talking about how they would spend their winnings when they eventually won the pools. Certainly, I have no doubt that if I ever win the lottery - while I will use a lot of it for worthy political causes - I wouldn't have the slightest qualm in spending a considerable portion of it for my own personal benefit.

One of my favourite examples of

this dichotomy on the left is between the teetotal Tony Benn and the larger-than-life American writer Gore Vidal. I recommend reading Vidal's first volume of autobiography, *Palm Beach*, back-to-back with Tony Benn's *Diaries 1940-63*. The men have remarkable similarities - Tony comes from two generations of MPs and Gore Vidal from two generations of US senators. Both were born in 1925, with Benn growing up in the little village of Westminster politics while Vidal did the same in Washington.

In Tony's diaries he describes his training for the Air Force in Africa at the age of 19 and recounts how their vicar led a discussion after dinner about whether sex outside marriage could ever be considered acceptable. The group concluded that it couldn't. At exactly the same time, Gore Vidal was captain of a small naval boat in the Pacific, writing in his diary: "I've realised that I can seduce any man on this boat once I put my mind to it."

I have often mused during dull committee meetings how different politics might have been if Tony had had a touch of Gore's indulgence and

Gore had had a touch of Tony's diligence. I say all this by way of making absolutely clear that I think that how politicians choose to lead their private lives is nobody's business but their own. It's a completely different matter, however, when we consider public money.

In 1984, the GLC put together a roadshow for the seaside party conferences. I knew that we should open ourselves to attacks from the Tory press if we used expensive hotels. In fact, we went so down-market that on one occasion we ended up in a B&B that was used extensively by local prostitutes, much to the embarrassment of the two well known newspaper journalists who wandered through our bar one night with their prostitutes of choice. In the following months these journalists seemed to avoid writing any strongly critical articles.

It seems to me that these principles should underpin the approach of the new mayor of London, which is why I have pledged that if elected I will use public transport rather than a chauffeur-driven limousine. But I will have the odd glass of wine.

We cannot allow the Serbs to attempt a 'final solution'



PADDY ASHDOWN

Now we must think the unthinkable and consider the least worst option of sending the troops in

IN THE Balkans, the winter snows have never yet stopped bloodshed. Some observers have said that both sides in the Kosovo conflict were waiting for the spring for a resumption of hostilities; but, as I learnt on my last trip to the region just before Christmas, the trigger for a new outbreak of war has not been the weather but the politics.

During that visit I travelled out with the British verifiers, mostly former soldiers, as they looked at the evidence of almost daily violent deaths on both sides, and as they put themselves at risk in trying to damp down tensions on the ground. Even as we stood in their small operations room discussing the photographs of the latest slaughter, word was coming in of yet another episode in the Kosovo tragedy, with an even higher death toll. A few minutes later more news came in, this time of an attack on Serb teenagers in a bar by the Kosovo Liberation Army, which seemed to mark the beginning of a new "dirty war", targeting civilians as well as Serb security personnel.

The October agreement brokered by Richard Holbrooke had completely run out of steam well before Christmas, the unarmed verifiers were having their authority eroded daily, and the time that the deal bought for us to find a political solution in Kosovo has been wasted - not least by delays in getting the verifiers out into the field, and because of the Albanian community's inability to speak with one voice. That agreement, for all its faults, created a political dynamic strong enough to replace the dynamic of force for a time and, crucially, it opened up the opportunity for the international community to become involved. And that involvement, in the form of OSCE (Organisation for Security and Co-operation in

Europe) verifiers, has made a measurable difference in certain specific situations on the ground, but has proved inadequate when violence and reprisals begin to escalate again. It is certainly no substitute for a political solution.

The extraction force over the border in Macedonia is a useful political symbol but would be of no real military use as a force to pull out the verifiers, and so the monitors are still all we have. But with violence escalating again, they are clearly an inadequate barrier between the warring sides; they are unprotected and their authority has been undermined by Belgrade and by the Serb and the KLA commanders in the field.

Now we can see the province sliding back into war. It has been swift but not unexpected, particularly not to those of us who had been arguing for earlier intervention since the middle of last year. Casualties have been mounting on both sides, and this week's atrocity in Racak represents a fundamental challenge to the West's policy.

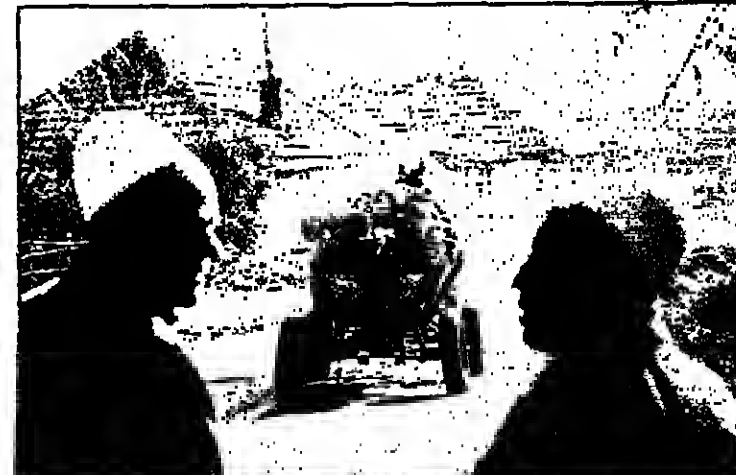
We have one last chance to persuade both sides but, most urgently, President Milosevic to accept the authority of the international community and return to compliance with the terms of the ceasefire - including full co-operation with the International War Crimes Tribunal investigators as specified in UN Resolution 1199, which governs the ceasefire.

But if these last-ditch efforts fail - and I am pessimistic - we must consider our options, which have been narrowing with every month that passes. If we do fail, then Nato and the OSCE will be faced with a very stark choice: to take the verifiers out, or to send the troops in.

Neither decision will be easy. On the face of it, the obvious decision would be to pull the verifiers out. But I do not believe that we in the West could allow ourselves to stand aside and be spectators in the carnage that would ensue. I have no doubt that Milosevic and the increasingly powerful right-wing nationalists who dominate politics in Belgrade would see withdrawal of the verifiers as a signal of a failure of the international community's will, a green light for a full-scale campaign against the Albanian population in Kosovo.

The region would be flooded with the main battle units of the Yugoslav army - the fifth most powerful army in Europe - and we would see the Serbs attempt a "final solution" to their Kosovo question. The bloodshed would be horrific, both for the Kosovar Albanians and for the minority Kosovar Serbs, and would almost inevitably ignite the wider Balkan conflict in Macedonia, Albania and the southern Balkans that we have all feared since the beginning of last year.

It is clearly inconceivable that we should stand back and allow this to



Albanian villagers flee after the carnage at Racak Reuters

happen. Air strikes may be used to prevent further instances of the use of excessive force and heavy weapons against defenceless Albanian villages, and to force Milosevic to return to compliance if Serbia uses heavy weapons against Albanian civilians in contravention of the Geneva Convention. But on their own, air strikes offer us only a way of dealing with Milosevic's aggression, not a way of dealing with the KLA or with the steady trickle of weapons and ill-trained young men and women who attack from across the Albanian border - attacks probably sponsored by money from the Albanian diaspora and which frequently send the young volunteers to their deaths. So now we must think the unthinkable, and consider the least worst option of putting troops in on the ground.

This is profoundly undesirable, it is no small step, and has long-term implications. It puts into question the status of Kosovo as a province of Serbia and it would mean an occupation of the sovereign territory of the Serbian state by Nato forces. It

would be a real challenge to Europe's as yet unproven ability to handle a co-ordinated peace-keeping mission. But the actions of the Serbs in perpetrating the atrocities in Racak and elsewhere, and in flouting the decisions of the international community, have diminished or removed their moral authority to govern Kosovo on the basis of 5 per cent of Kosovo's population.

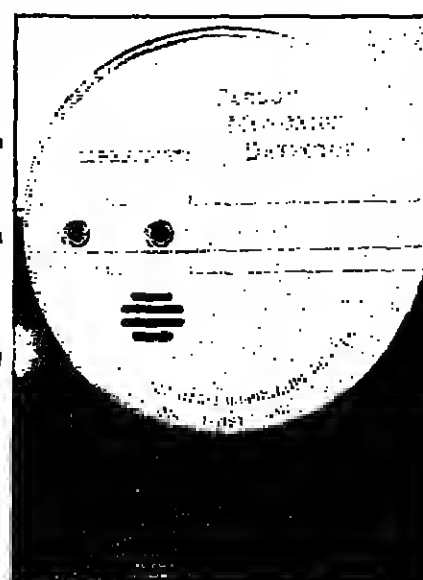
The present policy has one last chance - and if it works we must urgently reinvest the political process with the momentum it needs - but if it fails we must be prepared for the worst and for the only option we have left. We have, once again, as in Bosnia, done too little too late, and we have left ourselves no good options and no other choice.

I asked one of the verifiers whom I met whether he could detect a will for peace in Kosovo. He replied: "I can't see a will for peace. But I can see a will not to return to war." That may be all we have to go on in our hopes to build a future for the region, but we cannot and must not stand aside.

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Don't be scared of modified food

AGRICULTURE IS at the heart of the US economy. It employs some 20 million people. Agricultural products are our biggest export. The last few years have seen a major shift in American agricultural policy - the greatest change since the Thirties - due to the globalisation of agricultural markets.

American farmers have seen their income suffer as a result of the Russian and Asian financial crises, the abundance of global supply, and the resulting drop in commodity prices. This situation has been exacerbated by recent drought conditions in the United States.

To respond to these hardships, the US government is seeking ways to strengthen the social safety net for American farmers, while preserving the market freedoms gained from reduced government intervention.

France faces a similar challenge: how to encourage dynamism in the agricultural sector and reduce government subsidies, while at the same time providing a safety net for farmers whose livelihood is often threatened by conditions

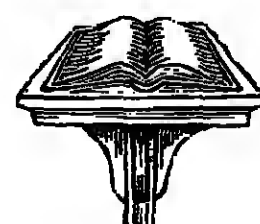
that are beyond their control. The proper role of biotechnology in agriculture is a particularly delicate issue.

In the United States, we consider the results of biotechnology used in farming to be extremely promising.

Insect-resistant plants and drought-resistant corn are two such examples. In each case, biotechnology has increased output. It has also lowered production costs and reduced the use of pesticides and water, bringing environmental and health benefits to both farmers and consumers.

If we can use biotechnology to increase food stocks and permit crops to grow in harsh climates, we may begin to eliminate the scourge of famine and hunger in the world.

Given this positive point of view, the use of biotechnology in agriculture has expanded rapidly in the US. More than 30 transgenic crops have been approved for sale, including such staples as soybeans, corn, potatoes and canola oil (from oil-seed rape). Three years ago, not a single genetically engineered crop was planted for commercial use. This year, an estimated 65 million acres



PODIUM

FELIX ROHATYN
From a speech by the
American ambassador
in Paris to the
Fédération du Crédit
Agricole, Paris

world-wide were planted with transgenic seeds, including about a quarter of next year's US corn and one-third of the soybean crops. Experts predict that within 10 years an estimated 95 per cent of America's plant-derived foods will be genetically engineered.

Research is under way on the next generation of foods enhanced by biotechnology that could have real health benefits: meat without

cholesterol, oils with less fat, wheat with more protein, to name but a few.

The safety of biotechnology is widely discussed in the European press. Confidence in biotechnology in the United States is due largely to our confidence in the government agencies responsible for food safety. No genetically modified organisms (GMOs) may be used in the United States without meeting strict government requirements. In fact, three federal agencies must review and approve the use of GMOs in the United States. Scientists for regulatory agencies in the European Union, Canada, Japan and Australia, plus the World Health Organisation, have also studied any possible risks - and have determined that the GMOs that are on the market today are safe for human health.

Another reason why American consumers have generally accepted these products is that they aren't really anything new. All plant breeding involves the genetic manipulation of plants. Virtually all of the agricultural products sold and consumed have been altered by this kind of cross-

breeding. Genetically modified foods are as safe as the original plants from which the genes were taken. Every country has the right and the responsibility to establish a policy of food labelling.

Since May 1998, the European Union has required the labelling of GMO products as such. However, for the reasons I have just outlined, the United States has taken a different position. We believe, for example, that a type of corn that has been genetically modified to resist drought is no different from a hybrid corn developed to give higher yields, and therefore requires no special label. The difference of opinion on these issues may result from historical and cultural factors, but one thing is clear: American, French and European consumers must have confidence in what they consume, and producers must be responsible for what they produce.

As we seek to meet this common goal, we should open channels of communication, share our scientific findings and isolate our decisions from politics and emotion.

The sinking of our estates



DEBORAH ORR

Cats, dogs, birds and frogs were subjected to ritual cruelty, preferably before screaming toddlers

A COUPLE of years ago, my brother and I indulged in an odd and nostalgic adventure. We found a way into the derelict "maisonette" blocks that our family had moved to when I was three (and that he'd been born and bred in) and paid a visit to the flat in which we'd spent most of our childhood.

Our building, and the others around it, were empty, awaiting remodelling and reclamation. Muirhouse, Motherwell, is just one of the thousands of "schemes" - as council housing estates are called in Scotland - that are being regenerated in a bid to rid them of the myriad social ills that have dogged them almost from the moment they became occupied.

I stood looking out of the window with its view of the whole of the Clyde valley and found that I could remember the day we'd moved in, rehoused when my parents' tenement flat was bought by the council under a compulsory purchase order. This new place was light and airy, absolutely the definition of modern. We now had our own bathroom instead of a shared one. There was no coal fire, but something exotic called under-floor heating.

Everything sparkled with whiteness and cleanliness. It was all brand spanking new - maisonettes and towers clustered together on the brow of a hill. We could see for miles. But we couldn't see what the future held. We could never have guessed how quickly this little Utopia, and thousands like it, would become that dread thing, a sink estate. My brother and I still can't believe that such a terrible dehumanisation had happened around us as we played out our childhood, safe in the flat with the beautiful view.

In a study published this week by the Oxford Psychologists Press there is more bad news for council tenants. The study, which examined the intelligence and achievements of 2,000 people, found that highly intelligent people who live in council housing get lower pay, fewer holidays and less promotion than owner-occupiers of similar intelligence. They are also less likely to complete full-time education. The authors Dr Mark Cook, a psychology lecturer at the University of Wales and Robert McHenry, an occupa-



The Muirhouse estate: 'I still can't believe that such a terrible dehumanisation happened around us as I played out my childhood'

Mark Rummack/SDR

tional psychologist, found that "prejudices are a valid factor. Intelligent people who live in public housing seem to be caught up in some trap of under-achievement. They're being judged by where they live."

That academia has taken so long to find concrete statistics to support such a self-evident truth makes it more amazing that my mother, who was searching for a new home, my mother met hundreds of people who were unhappy with their council accommodation and keen to tackle the problems they saw, if only the council would help them make an investment in the community. But the council wouldn't. Instead, its rules became draconian and its involvement became minimal.

Early on, a few people had been rehoused after getting lines from their doctors about their nerves. But so many tenants had cottoned on to this that the strategy quickly stopped working. We were told that we didn't have enough "points" and that unless we could get a "swap" we had to stay until my brother and I were deemed too old to share a room together.

But already the scheme had a bad reputation and the only people who wanted a swap were those worse off than us. We saw places

that someone leapt from the building every week.

My mum was certain that this family, for one, had to get out of this scheme or else it would ruin us. There were plenty of other people who agreed with her. Over the years of searching for a new home, my mother met hundreds of people who were unhappy with their council accommodation and keen to tackle the problems they saw, if only the council would help them make an investment in the community. But the council wouldn't. Instead, its rules became draconian and its involvement became minimal.

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But already the scheme had a bad reputation and the only people who wanted a swap were those worse off than us. We saw places

overrun with mice, flats in corridors that smelled of urine, flats with excrement smeared on the walls. And there was worse to come. When we finally got our points, we would be offered three alternative homes. We had to accept the third one, no matter what.

At that point my mother really became a warrior. There were still some good council houses around. The thing to do was to find them before someone on the council put in a word for their demise - which happened, hilariously, all the time. Every evening she would pound the streets looking for empty houses, or places where there were signs that people were moving out. And every day, she'd go down to the housing office with a list of places that seemed to her to be empty. Eventually they gave in, and we got a new house with three bedrooms and a back and front garden. That house, like most of the others in that estate, is owner-occupied now and my mother's strategy for housing her family decently is no longer a realistic prospect for anyone.

Meanwhile Muirhouse is being "regenerated", as are about 4,000

other sink estates in Britain. Today it looks staggeringly ugly. While the original towers really did have a clean, bright, modernist beauty - and could have been kept that way with dedicated maintenance and regular licks of paint - they have now been clad alternately in pink and turquoise versions of something cheap and strappy. The maisonettes have been turned into hybrid terraced houses, but the gardens are tiny and invite unwelcome visitors from the public space in which they are marooned. Other blocks still stand empty and derelict, for the regeneration work is years behind schedule and by the time the scheme is finished they'll have to start again. The people who are trying again to colonise this blighted hill can be in no doubt as to why their address is a stigma, for the evidence is all around them still.

Across Britain, the people of 17 council estates like this one will see the places they have tried - and failed - to live well in, razed to the ground. The rest will be regenerated by the same organisations that built them to let them rot in the first place. All the Social Exclusion Units

in the world can't make councils good at running housing initiatives. And they can't stop the kind of social exclusion that starts with a glance at the address on the top of your job application form.

The truth is that councils that weren't any good at providing housing in the first place have been left with just a rump of particularly difficult housing to service. The councils responsible for building failed estates should not be responsible for rebuilding them. Public housing must be put into the hands of dedicated organisations. Housing associations have again and again proved themselves to be more flexible, imaginative and sympathetic towards the community than councils seem able to be. These are the organisations that should be planning a future for public housing. Council housing is discredited, its tenants are discriminated against, and the same mistakes that we saw 30 years ago are being repeated. Let's start again. There are plenty of intelligent council tenants who would be only too happy to let housing associations know what they really need.

RIGHT OF REPLY

MIKE WILLIS



The chairman of the ProLife Alliance rejects Lynn Eaton's call for accessible contraception

THE REDUCTION in teenage pregnancies is once again top of the agenda in the battle for the health of the nation. The Government has set ambitious targets and health apparatchiks have stormed into action.

Just before Christmas, Boots was wheeled into the vanguard of the teenage pregnancy-reduction strategy. A teenage drop-in centre was established at a branch in Glasgow. Angry parents picketed the store and a national boycott is in place.

This has done little to deter the Health Trust of Glasgow which now wants to extend the Boots drop-in concept into schools. Their strategy appears to be about providing accessible clinics where sexually active youngsters can obtain contraceptives - which, they believe, will tackle the problem of unwanted teenage pregnancies.

The last 30 years have taught us that this is a flawed strategy: contraceptives fail and the more we encourage teenagers to indulge in "safe sex", the more unwanted pregnancies will result.

The ProLife Alliance has been arguing for a complete reversal of sex education policies. Our starting-point is similar to the development of anti-smoking policies for the young. Under-age sex, like smoking, goes on, but it is bad for your health and in the long term it is better for the teenager if this behaviour is changed.

The incidence of sexually transmitted disease among the young is at record levels. Abstinence programmes in the US have achieved startling results in adapting teenage lifestyles. In Michigan, teenage pregnancy rates have been reduced by 25 per cent. Saying "no" is a strategy well worth developing - perhaps it is just too simple for the so-called health professionals.

Drawing repellent conclusions

THOMAS HENRY Huxley rose from humble beginnings to become one of the most eminent of Victorian biologists, but along the way he lost his faith in scientific reason. When his son died aged three, he was denied the traditional comforts of religion. In the depth of his grief he wrote to his friend Charles Kingsley: "I could have fancied a devil scoffing at me... and asking what profit it was to have stripped myself of the hopes and consolations of the mass of mankind? To which my only reply was and is: 'Oh devil! Truth is much better than profit.'"

There is something odd about Huxley's commitment to his scientific beliefs, but his story also shows how the rise of science has made the world a crueler place. Instead of a heaven and earth created for man by



WEDNESDAY BOOK

BY BRIAN APPLEYARD, HARPERCOLLINS, £16.99

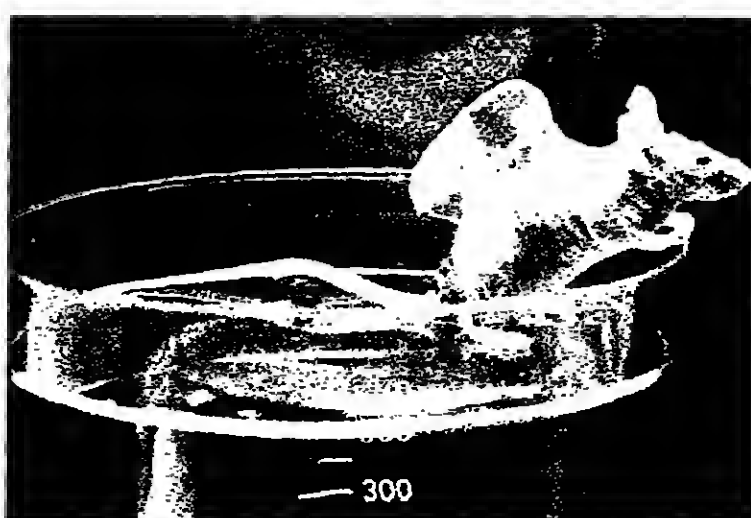
a benevolent God, we now have a random universe in which natural selection blindly arranges matter into strange animal shapes.

Brian Appleyard has been urging for some years that we should not just stand by and let science destroy our values. In his earlier book, *Understanding the Present*, he argues that the scientific world view subverts religion and culture, yet offers nothing in its place. This new volume contin-

ues the message, with an emphasis on recent advances in genetic science. In Appleyard's view, the unravelling of the DNA code is "the most important discovery in human history", which "will leave nothing unchanged".

He begins with a standard run-through of the brave new technologies on the horizon, including genetic scanning, selective abortion, gene therapy and cloned body parts. Yet Appleyard does little to help us judge which prospects are likely to graduate from fantasy to fact, since he makes no attempt to explain the science of DNA. This is disappointing from a journalist who made his name by distilling complex subjects for a mass audience, and it compares badly with a recent Penguin by Philip Kitcher, *The Lives of Come*, which covers the same ground as Appleyard, yet engages seriously with the issues that depend on scientific understanding.

Much of Appleyard's agitation about the new genetics seems misplaced. He devotes a great deal of attention to the history of eugenic thinking, from the Spanish Inquisition to research on IQ differences between races. He is, of course, right that eugenic ideas are destructive of civilised values, as Nazism proved, but the trouble is that eugenics owes nothing to the discovery of DNA. Even the most modern investigations into genetic IQ depend on statistical techniques that have been around since the beginning of this century, and are independent of assumptions about the molecular basis of inheritance. Appleyard gets increasingly en-



Tissue engineering: one of Appleyard's brave new technologies BBC

tangled in his eagerness to demonstrate that genetic science is the root of all amorality. On IQ, for example, most sane commentators would agree that, while inheritance does make a difference, many other factors do too. But Appleyard will have none of this. As he sees it, once we start down the path of genetic science, we must conclude that everything important is genetic. All inequalities are justified, and the human bloodstock is in danger of degeneration. At one point, Appleyard suddenly seems to notice that he is in danger of ending up on the wrong side, and inserts a paragraph explaining that he does not necessarily endorse these ideas, but that "there is a logic which has to be followed through if we are ever to understand what genetics is all about". He adds: "Precisely what I personally think about all this will become clear later."

Unfortunately, it doesn't. Appleyard suggests at the end that the solution is to deny the truth of scientific ideas. But it is surely too late for that. As Huxley's sad story shows, we cannot put

the cat of scientific truth back into the bag of ignorance. Of course, not all scientific claims are proven, and we should do well to treat many revelations with a pinch of salt. But there is enough in science, including genetic science, that cannot be denied and must be come to terms with if we are to get our values straight.

What we need are writers who can explain the relevant science to the public, and allow us to shape our values intelligently to the new information. Brian Appleyard's previous work has shown that he is as good at this as anybody. But in this book he is in danger of giving the game to the enemy. In his impatience to damn science, he ends up drawing repellent conclusions from inescapable scientific truths. Just as well that his arguments don't hold water: given that science will not go away.

DAVID PAPINEAU

The reviewer is professor of the philosophy of science at King's College, London

Kosova children appeal to Independent readers

Kosovar children refugees in Albania face cold, hunger and disease as winter deepens. Many are in deep shock, having witnessed their parents and relatives killed in the awful atrocities from which they fled. Albania, the poorest country in Europe, has few resources to support the massive influx of refugees.

Your action will help children who have lost everything

The European Children's Trust needs your swift response to set up an emergency centre in Shkoder, northern Albania, to help 2,500 refugees. Our centre will provide basic necessities and schooling to give security to the confused and frightened refugee children living in Shkoder.

These are children and families whose homes have been lost, perhaps forever. Special help is needed for the traumatised children who have witnessed terrible crimes, and must now start to live a normal life.

£30 could buy emergency medicine and food supplements for 5 Kosovar refugee children for a week.

Please send what you can to save the displaced Kosovar children this winter. Call 0800 056 3686 now or cut the coupon below

I enclose £30 (only choice £) to save Kosovar children. (Cheques to The European Children's Trust please). Or debit my Access/Visa/CAF card.

Card no. _____ Expiry date _____
Signature _____ Date _____

Mr/Mrs/Ms _____
Address _____
Postcode _____

Telephone no. _____
Please return to: Tanya Barrow, (17/A), Kosova Emergency Appeal, The European Children's Trust, FREEPOST K23559, 644 Queen Street, London, EC4A 4AR.

Or call 0800 056 3686 NOW.
Please act NOW - your gift will give hope



Karl Denver

TO MANY people, Karl Denver was a novelty performer, known for his octave-spanning acrobatics on the 1962 hit "Wimoweh".

But he was also a versatile singer and acoustic guitarist and he chose good songs irrespective of their sources - turn-of-the-century ballads, music-hall favourites and contemporary pop songs as well as folk, country and rock'n'roll material. With the exception of Lonnie Donegan, no other artist in the early 1960s worked from such a broad base. And, like Donegan, Denver had such a distinctive voice that whatever he sang automatically became his own. For a start, how many other pop singers of the day could yodel?

He was born Angus Murdo McKenzie, in Glasgow, in 1932. He left school at 14 and embarked on a decade of wanderlust and adventure. First he joined the Scandinavian Mercantile Marine as a deckhand and was soon travelling the world. He practised the guitar and entertained his shipmates. Next he went into the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders and was wounded during the Korean War. Then he returned to the sea. He was such a tough, hard-living character that the Rhodesians gave him the nickname "Boaty Masetero", meaning "brother of Satan".

Still only 21, he jumped ship in America and played in clubs in Tennessee and Denver. He befriended the country singers Faron Young and Lefty Frizzell and became the first British performer to play on the *Grand Ole Opry* radio show. In 1956, he was offered a management and recording contract, but, as he said, "I was asked to sign up, but I had to do the bump as I shouldn't have been there in the first place".

He returned to the UK and settled in Blackburn, Lancashire, where he renamed himself Karl Denver. He said, "I had a son called Karl who was killed and I thought I would keep his name. For a time I lived in Fort Collins in Colorado and I thought Denver was a good place, so I became Karl Denver".

Soon he was established around the Lancashire clubs and pubs, notably the Yew Tree in Manchester, and the television producer Jack Good offered him work on a new ITV series, *Whom?* Good also produced Denver's records for Decca, with two excellent musicians, the guitarist Kevin Neill from the Joe Loss Orchestra and the bassist Jerry Cottrell, the Karl Denver Trio was formed.

The highlight of Denver's act was a fiery version of a Zulu chant, "Wimoweh", which he claimed to have learnt in Africa. However, it had been recorded in 1952 by the Weavers featuring Pete Seeger and Denver's version is clearly based on this. Decca recorded "Wimoweh" at the end of Denver's first session but decided that it was too bizarre to release as his first single. Instead they selected "Marcheta", a revival of a 1912 ballad. Denver didn't mind. "The lyrics were beautiful, but it was my range that grabbed the people. It was a hell of a range that I did it in." The press release from June 1961 says,

"A pint-sized Scot with a king-sized yodel and a siren voice that packs the power of a hurricane blows onto the disc world this week. Denver, conscious of his size, was one of the first performers to wear Cuban heels."

"Marcheta" made No 8 on the charts, as did his second single, a revival of an old-time country song, "Mexicali Rose". Around this time, quite independently, an American doo-wop group called the Tokens had alighted on "Wimoweh" and added some lyrics, calling it "The Lion Sleeps Tonight". It made the US charts and started to gain popularity in Britain. Denver's fans in Manchester organised a petition for Decca to release "Wimoweh" as a single. Although "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" was already in the charts, Denver's version was so electrifying that it stormed past the Tokens to reach No 4 in March 1962.

Denver's first album, also called *Wimoweh*, reached the Top Ten. The songs on his LPs display the wide ranges of his voice and repertoire. There was the knockabout "My Canary Has Circles Under His Eyes", a mysterious version of "She Moved Thru' the Fair", the standard "Moonlight Becomes You" and an invigorating treatment of the Irish folk song "Three Lovely Lassies From Bannion".

Denver, an experienced man in his late twenties, found himself touring on package shows with the teen idols of the day. He would supplement his income by playing roulette with the adolescent stars. He admitted later, "They thought I was a boozier and a ne'er-do-well. I was always in the pub across the road when the bus was about to go. Once, when the musicians could not afford a meal, we went into a field and brought them back some turnips."

Another musician, Clinton Ford, recalls, "He could be a pest at times, but I really liked the guy. We were playing together at the Yew Tree pub in Manchester and there was a girl magician on the bill. She produced a chihuahua out of a doll's house, and Karl was always annoying the dog, trying to disrupt the act. I was so pleased when the dog bit his finger that I went and bought the dog a drink."

In 1962, Denver hoped to represent the UK in the Eurovision Song Contest,



Denver in 1962, the year he had a hit with 'Wimoweh' *Redferns*

the Beatles. Sadly, he found his records hard to come by once the Mersey Beat boom had started. However, the Beatles viewed him kindly and had him as their special guest on the US television show *Shindig!*

In 1963 Denver and Ken Dodd both covered the same US country song, Bill Anderson's "Still". Denver recalled, "I was at Manchester Airport flying out, and Ken Dodd was in front of me. I went up behind him and started singing 'Still' in a silly voice. He said, 'Bloody hell, it's you. You've not done it very well, have you?'"

authority *ad infinitum*. "A few years later he told me, 'I've had three wives. God bless 'em and keep 'em, because I certainly can't'."

Retaining Kevin Neill in his Trio, Denver returned to performing in cabaret and in the back rooms of pubs. He played summer seasons and had some success in Jersey. In 1962, *Tight Fit* topped the charts with a revival of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" but Denver failed to grasp this opportunity to re-establish his career. In 1969 he was teamed with one of Manchester's leading groups, Happy Mondays, for "Lazydays", a curious record which rewrote the Beatles' "Ticket to Ride", and although the single made the Top Fifty, Denver contracted pneumonia whilst filming the video.

In 1993 he released what was to be his final album, *Just Loving You*, aimed at the country music market. He missed almost as many notes as he hit and although he burnt up musical energy on stage, he was a frail man whose condition was made no better through heavy drinking. The final song he recorded was Burt Bacharach's "The Story of My Life".

SPENCER LEIGH

Angus Murdo McKenzie (Karl Denver), singer: born Glasgow 16 December 1932; three times married (two sons, and one son deceased); died Manchester 21 December 1998.

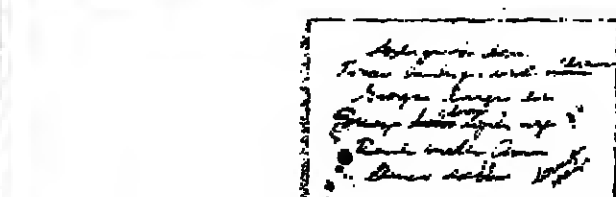
"They thought I was a boozier and a ne'er-do-well. I was always in the pub across the road"

but he felt a little intimidated - "Everybody else had big orchestras and I was just a wee Glaswegian standing in the middle of a big stage." Although Ronnie Carroll won the UK nomination with the ludicrous "Ring a Ding Girl", Denver had a Top Ten hit with "Never Goodbye", a fine ballad by the veteran composer Jimmy Kennedy.

Denver can be seen in the pop film *Just For Fun* (1963) and he hosted the BBC Light Programme's series, *Side By Side*, working in three programmes with

In 1964 Denver returned to his roots for a live album, *Karl Denver at the Yew Tree*, which many see as his best work. It was recorded during the day while he was in pantomime at night at the Palace Theatre, Manchester.

He saw no reason to pay his tax demands and was declared bankrupt in 1966 and then again in 1973. The courts took a dim view of his third bankruptcy, in 1978, and he was told, "You must be shown that court orders have teeth. Otherwise, you will cock a snook at



LITERARY NOTES

ANDREW HURLEY

Blown away by the Borges style

THIS YEAR marks the centenary of the birth of the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges, whose stories changed forever the way writers and readers would look at fiction. For most readers, it was Borges' images - the labyrinths, libraries, knives, blindness, tigers, roses, rivers, maps, mathematics - that were most striking and original, but for Spanish-language writers, it was Borges' prose, the writing itself, that blew them away. Spanish had quite simply never been written like this before.

Borges worked hard at his style - by the time he published his first story he was in his late thirties - and in his prefaces and introductions he is forever talking about purging it of a youthful baroque, trying always for directness. If a translator is to convey some of the awe, the shock of the new, that readers in Buenos Aires felt when they first read Borges' fictions, then something of the style of that astounding writing needs to be captured.

What Borges finally achieved is a style characterised by a determined economy of resources in which every word is weighted, every word tells. In this unemphatic style, effects are often achieved with a single exploding word or phrase, dropped almost as though off-handedly into a quiet sentence: "He examined his wounds and saw, without

astonishment, that they had healed." This laconic detail "without astonishment", coming at the very beginning of "The Circular Ruins", will probably only at the end of the story be recalled by the reader, who will, retrospectively, see that it changes everything in the story; it is quintessential Borges.

Another clear mark of Borges' prose is its employment of words - usually adjectives, but sometimes nouns - with, or for, their etymological value. One of the most famous opening lines in Spanish literature is: "Nadie lo vio desembarcar en la unanime noche." "No one saw him slip from the boat in the unanimous night." What an odd adjective, "unanimous" - "the one-souled night." It is so odd, in fact, that other English translations have not allowed it. But it is just as odd in Spanish, and is a manifestation of Borges' explicit intention to let the Latin or Greek root govern the modern word's usage.

Borges' writing has often been called intellectual, and indeed it is dense with allusion. But it is also simple: the sentences are almost invariably classical in their symmetry, in their balance. Borges likes parallelism, subtle repetitions-with-variations; his only indulgence in "shocking" the reader (an effect he repudiated) may be the "Mill-tonian displacement of adjectives" ("the readers at their studios lamps") that he al-

ludes to in his preface to "The Maker". He uses a great many semi-colons; in subtly suppressing the ands, but, thens of the connection between two clauses, Borges achieves mystery. One knows these two statements are related, but the relationship is not overt or explicit; the reader finds, instead, the shimmer of indeterminacy.

Recognising these aspects of Borges' hard-won style, I have tried, of course, to reproduce it in my English translations, even though it would only seem "classical" and even a bit "old-fashioned" to the English-language reader. In every way I could - the choice of words, the shape of the sentences, the displacement of those adjectives, the punctuation - I have tried to respect the elements of his style.

Borges' prose was historic: Mario Vargas Llosa tells us that Spanish was suddenly "purified", "intellectualised" by it. For the translator who is aware of the historical importance of Borges' texts, the watershed they represent in Spanish-language letters, it is that prose that one must at least attempt to capture. An appreciation not only of Borges' images and themes, but of his astonishing achievement in prose, depends on it.

Andrew Hurley is the translator of *Jorge Luis Borges, Collected Fictions* (Allen Lane, 21 January, £20)

County court had to make possession order

WHERE A local council commenced possession proceedings in the county court under section 127 of the Housing Act 1996 in respect of a dwelling house subject to an introductory tenancy, once the court had ascertained that the requirements regarding the notice of proceedings in section 128 of the Act had been satisfied, it was positively required to make a possession order.

The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal of the council against the decision that the county court had jurisdiction to entertain a defence in possession proceedings brought under section 127 of the Housing Act 1996. On 15 April 1997 the council granted a joint weekly tenancy to the defendants, which was expressed to be an introductory tenancy within the terms of the Housing Act 1996.

Section 127 of the Act provided: (1) The landlord may only bring an introductory tenancy to an end by obtaining an order of the court for possession of the dwelling house. (2) The court shall make such an order unless the provisions of section 128 apply.

Section 128 provided for service of a notice of proceedings. Section 129 provided for a review by the landlord, on request, of its decision to seek a possession order under section 127. Possession proceedings against the defendants were commenced on 9 April 1998 for breaches of the tenancy agreement, the council having already conducted a review under section 129. The council objected to the jurisdiction of the county court to hear the

WEDNESDAY LAW REPORT

20 JANUARY 1999

Manchester City Council v Cochrane and another
Court of Appeal
(Lord Justice Auld, Lord Justice Justice and Sir John Knox)
21 December 1998

defence the defendants wished to advance.

The district judge, taking the view that the county court did have jurisdiction to hear and determine the proposed defences, gave directions for *inter alia*, the filing of the defence. The council's appeal was dismissed by the judge, and it appealed to the Court of Appeal.

Andrew Arden QC and Jonathan Manning (Manchester City Attorney) for the council, Peter E. Buckley (Clifford Chapman & Co, Manchester) for the defendants.

Sir John Knox said that the private law right of the tenant under an introductory tenancy was no more than a right to possession until an order for possession in favour of the landlord was made by the court; and such an order had to be made once the requirements of section 128 regarding the notice of proceedings had been complied with.

By enacting section 127(2) in mandatory terms, Parliament had clearly imposed a statutory limitation on the right of an

introductory tenant to retain possession. There was a remarkable restriction of the court's powers in that under section 128(1), the court was prohibited from even entertaining possession proceedings unless the various requirements regarding the notice of proceedings contained in section 128 were satisfied, whilst if those requirements were satisfied, the court was positively required to make a possession order under section 127(2). The function of the court was reduced to that of ascertaining that it had jurisdiction to entertain the proceedings.

It was accepted by the council that its duty to comply with section 129(2) was subject to judicial review. It was equally clear that that duty was a public law duty and that the correlative right in the tenants to have it lawfully performed had to be a public law right.

The county court had at least to have jurisdiction to grant an adjournment if satisfied that there was a real chance of leave to apply for judicial review being granted. It was, however, one thing to grant an adjournment to permit the exercise of relevant rights in another jurisdiction, and quite another thing for the court itself to embark upon an investigation of the very issues which that other jurisdiction would have power to rule upon. It would be a clear contravention of section 127(2) for the county court to entertain a defence based on a denial of allegations of breaches of a tenancy agreement relied upon in a notice under section 128.

KATE O'HANLON Barrister

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

COOPER: Joan Davies CB, died on 15 January in Brighton General Hospital. Formerly Children's Officer, East Sussex; Chief Inspector, Children's Department, Home Office; Director, Social Work Service, DHSS. Honorary Research Fellow, University of Sussex, since 1978. Much loved by her family and friends and respected by her colleagues. Private family cremation at her request. Donations if desired to: National Children's Bureau, 8 Watling St, London EC1V 9QE. Memorial meeting to be announced.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal, Patron, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, attends an International Task Force Symposium at Hallam Street, London W1, and attends the Rare Breeds Survival Trust's Horseshoe Appeal Banquet at Saddlers' Hall, London EC2. Princess Margaret, President, Friends of the Elderly, visits the Old Vicarage, the society's newly rebuilt home in Moulshford, Oxfordshire.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

BIRTHDAYS

Dr Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin, astronaut, 69; Mr Tom Baker, actor, 63; Sir John Chadwick, High Court judge, 58; Air Marshal Sir David Cousins, Air Member for Personnel, 56; Mr Derek Dougan, football player and writer, 61; The Very Rev David Edwards, Provost Emeritus of Southwark Cathedral, 70; Lord Ewing of Kirkford, former MP, 68; Sir David Fell, Chairman, Northern Bank, 56; The Hon Sir Henry Fisher, former President, Wolfson College, Oxford, 81; Miss Liza Goddard, actress, 49; Lord Hansard, industrialist, 77; Miss Barbara Hay, ambassador to Uzbekistan, 45; Major Dick Hern, former racehorse trainer, 78; Mr Frank Johnson, editor, *The Spectator*, 56; Commandant Vona McBride, former director, WRNS, 78; Mr Christopher Martin-Jenkins, radio sports commentator, 54; Miss Patricia Neal, actress, 73; Dr Jessica Rawson, Warden, Merton College, Oxford, 56; Mr Natan Shcharansky, Soviet dissident, 51; Mr Eric Stewart, rock guitarist, 54; Mr Curtis Strange, golfer, 44; Professor Nalin Chandra Wickramasinghe, astronomer, 60; Mr Nigel Williams, novelist, 51; Mr John Witherow, editor, the *Sunday Times*, 47.

ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Francesco Bartolomeo Conti, lutenist and composer, 1681; Jean-Jacques

Barthelemy, abbé and scholar, 1716; Theobald Wolfe Tone, Irish nationalist, 1763; André-Marie Ampère, physicist, 1775; John Tiplady Carrodd, violinist and composer, 1836; Ernest Chausson, composer, 1855; Richard Le Gallienne, writer, 1866; Johannes Jensen, poet and novelist, 1873; Hudie Ledbetter ("Leadbelly"), blues artist, 1889; Walter Piston, composer, 1894; George Burns (Nathan Birnbaum), comedian, writer and producer, 1896; Colin Clive (Clive Greig), actor, 1898; Joy Friederike Victoria (Gessner) Adamson, companion of wild animals, and writer, 1910; Federico Fellini, film director, 1920.

Deaths: Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor, 1612; Charles Montagu, first Duke of Manchester, 1722; Charles VII (Charles of Bavaria), Holy Roman Emperor, 1745; David Garrick, actor, 1779; John Howard, prison reformer, 1790; Sir John Soane, architect, 1837; Jean-François Millet, painter, 1875; William Miller, line-engraver, 1882; Richard Doddridge Blackmore, novelist, 1900; John Ruskin, social reformer, art critic and writer, 1900; Charles Montagu Doughty, poet and traveller, 1928; King George V, 1936; John Robinson Jeffers, poet, 1962; Edmund Charles Blunden, poet and critic, 1974; Derrick Heathcoat Amory, first Viscount Amory, statesman, 1981; (Peter John) Johnny Weissmuller, actor and swimmer, 1984; Sir Robert Brown Fraser, first Director-General of ITA, 1988; Audrey

Hepburn (Edda van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston), actress, 1933; Sir Matt (Matthew) Busby, football manager and president, 1994.

On this day: Simon de Montfort's parliament met in Westminster Hall, the first at which burgesses and knights attended, as well as the clergy and magnates, 1265; the trial of King Charles I began, 1649; the First Fleet sent to Botany Bay arrived in New South Wales, 1788; London Dock 5 was first opened, 1806; Chile defeated Peru and Bolivia at the Battle of Yungay, 1839; Hong Kong was ceded to Britain by China, 1841; the Mersey Railway Tunnel was opened by the Prince of Wales, 1886; the first game of basketball was played at Springfield, Massachusetts, 1892; during a naval battle at the entrance to the Dardanelles, the German ship *Breslau* was sunk and the Goeben badly damaged, 1918; Britain and China signed the Treaty of Peking, 1925; the RAF dropped 2,300 tons of bombs on Berlin, 1944; Sir Vivian Fuchs, leading the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, arrived at the South Pole, 1958; John Fitzgerald Kennedy was inaugurated as the 35th US president, 1961; four crew members of the RAF Red Arrow display were killed in a mid-air collision, 1971; George Bush was sworn in as 41st US president, 1989; Bill Clinton was sworn in as 42nd US president, 1993.

Today is the Feast Day of St Euthymius the Great, St

Fabian, pope, St Fechin and St Sebastian.

LECTURES

Victoria and Albert Museum: Patricia Baker, "An Ikut Robe of 19th-century Central Asia", 2pm. British Museum: Susan Youngs, "Medieval Irish Saints and Sinners", 11.30am; Lorna Goldsmith, "Leadon Hearts", 12.30pm. National Portrait Gallery: Simon Crocker, "The John Kobal Photographic Award 98 Series (II): John Kobal and the Hollywood Connection", 1.10pm.

DINNERS

Tobacco Pipe Makers' and Blenders' Company: Mr Simon Orlit, Master of the Company of Tobacco Pipe Makers and Blenders, presided at a dinner held yesterday evening at Painters' Hall, London EC2. Mr Alastair Ross Goobey was the principal guest. Mr John Alexander, Assistant, also spoke. Mr Tommy Cookson, Headmaster, Sevenoaks School, Mr Edward Blanchard-Whigglesworth, Company scholar and Mr David Jones, Superintendent of the Corporation Parks and Gardens, were among the guests.

APPOINTMENTS

Judge Harold Wilson and Judge Alan Wilkie QC, to be Judges of the Employment Appeal Tribunal.

PROBABLY THE best book ever is Richard Cook and Brian Morton's *The Penguin Guide to Jazz on CD*. In eight years and four editions, it has grown to 1750 pages.

Born in Kew and Duncannon, Cook and Morton do not affect hip jive, but their prose is liberally and yet in the event this is a classic

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

viviparous, adj.

Laswell's reworking of Miles Davis being a cause "to fear the heresies of the epigoni, and yet in the event this is a classic

Miles Davis album", also, in generative mode, "the Modern Jazz Quartet was born viviparously out of the post-war Dizzy Gillespie band".

Coined by Sir Thomas Browne, from the Latin for something brought forth alive, *viviparous* is entirely zoological in the OED - no hint of vibes.

You ask the questions

(Such as: Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, do you know the price of a pint of milk?)

Tara Palmer-Tomkinson, 27, is best known for being an *It Girl* – one of a group of women famous for their wealthy backgrounds and knack for publicity. Her parents, John and Charles Palmer-Tomkinson, are good friends of Prince Charles. She grew up on a 1,200-acre farm near Basingstoke and was educated at Sherborne school. After dropping out of stage school and trying a job in the City she came to the attention of the press when she was photographed with Princes William and Harry. Work as a model and on *Elle* followed. She has a column in the *Sunday Times* Style magazine.

What's the most important thing you've learnt in the last year?
Decca Fielding, Solihull
To make my own judgements about people – they're never what they seem. People who seem horrible are nice and vice versa. I know now I've got to be tougher and not taken in by people in my industry – the kind of people who never say "thank you", who offer to pay the bill, and who are drugs at parties – I find out they're from the papers. I've got to be naive.

What would you most like to be doing in five years?

Paul Faircloth, Manchester
Like to be married with a child living in the country and coming up to London regularly. I suppose I'd like to be living with my parents.

When was the last time you lost your temper?
John Fortman, Hove
I don't lose it for years. I am a little bit when I lose my temper. I lose it. These days I'm just smiling with kindness, being nice and making people feel better.

Within yourself, in two words.

Martie W
The person I've always been: a bit of a rebel and my father's daughter. I'm also a "celebrity" in this strange, super-world. Basically, I don't look myself in the same way as other people do.

What was the last film you saw and book you read?
John Foley, Edinburgh
The last film I saw was *101 Dalmatians*. The book is *The Little Prince* – my father used to read it to me as a child and I'm always rereading it.



Isn't there more to life than clothes and parties?
Fiona Limer, SW2
Yes, there is. In fact, when I'm at home, I wear jeans and go barefoot. As for parties, I've been to so many. I'm tired of them. I like being on my own a lot more. I love doing things like cleaning my own car and tidying my house. I don't want to be typecast as a party girl.

If you went to college, what would you most like to take a degree in?
Candice Marlborough, Essex
Psychology. I've become quite spiritual in the last year, which has made me more interested in psychology.

Do you get lots of freebies for mentioning certain products in your *Sunday Times* column?
Michelle Grove, Leicester
Yes, I do. If I say I've got flu, Lemsip will send me a whole batch of stuff. De Beers gave me a solitaire diamond. Virgin and British Airways have given me first-class tickets. But I can't advertise in my column.

Do you think Tony Blair is doing a good job?
Ben Todd, Birmingham
Yes, I think he may well get an Oscar one day. I know little about politics but I do like Tony's charisma and enthusiasm, although I don't really agree with his policies.

I've read that you're tired of getting dumped by men. Why? Do you pick the wrong ones?
Jennifer Eden, Harpenden
I'm not always getting dumped by men, but saying it appeals to a wider market if I'm writing a column for single women. A single mother in Brixton, say, will think "Thank God, she got dumped as well". I haven't had many boyfriends, and the one I'm with now is the right choice. I don't want a boyfriend who's from my world, who's rich and flashy. I want a real brick with a sense of humour – someone like my father, in fact.

Can you tell me what exactly an *It Girl* is?
Andy Spinner, Hemel Hempstead
It's the sort of girl who goes to all the right parties: polo, Ascot and Wimbledon. I hate the label but I'm associated with all that and I can't get rid of it. There's a time and a place for everything and I want to move on. The problem is, I've moved on, it's just that others haven't.

Where's the best place you've ever stayed?

Ursula Ambrose, Maidstone
Le Toussie Roche in Mauritius. It's an exclusive, very romantic hotel.

Do you know how much a pint of milk costs?
Helena Shortlands, Crouch End, north London
I don't, actually. A pound?

Who did you vote for in the last election?
Mark Collins, Leeds
Conservative. I'm not sure who for – I went back to Hampshire to vote. I just put the tick in the box.

What bores you most about your lifestyle?
Linda Free, Worcester
Freelance paparazzi – they're constantly outside my door. I ignore them but I find them frightening. It's not particularly nice when someone's waiting for you to screw up.

Can you cook?
Nikki Husband, Milton Keynes
I can cook pasta and toast.

What's your greatest insecurity?
Justine Finstock, Penarth
My weight – I worry I'm too thin. I'm always being told I look anorexic, but I eat for Britain. I just find it hard to put on weight.

What's the most money you've spent on one shopping spree?
Gael Riversdown, Pembroke
£1,500 on a leopard-print dress by Givenchy. I don't really go on sprees. I usually buy one thing, then feel guilty and come home again.

What career would you pursue if you weren't an *It Girl*?
Ali McDonald, Mole End
When I was little I always wanted to own a sweet shop. Now I think I'd like to own a clothes shop.

Where you surprised when Sophie and Edward announced their engagement?
Karen Price, Stockton-on-Tees
I'm delighted by the news – we all thought it was kind of inevitable.

NEXT WEEK

PETER TATCHELL, THEN FOLLOWED BY MARGARET COOK


Send any questions for Peter Tatchell, gay rights activist and Margaret Cook, ex-wife of Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, to: You Ask the Questions, Features, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, London E14 5DL (fax 0171-293 2182, or e-mail youquestions@independent.co.uk) by noon on Friday 22 January



All dressed up – but nothing to show for it? Jerry Hall on her wedding day in Bali

Reader, I never married her

Marry in Bali if you must. Just don't forget the paperwork. By Emma Cook

FOR JERRY it must be the icing on the non-existent wedding cake. To put up with so much ritual humiliation as a long-suffering wife is one thing, but as a duped cohabitee it is quite another. So much for the Hindu ceremony in Bali that should have meant so much. Legally it may be as binding as a piece of string.

More than anything, she must regret that so many mundanities were overlooked: the vital details that make such a service valid. There are reports that the priest at the ceremony did not receive the correct legal documents, and that a letter of authority had not been obtained from the British consul.

Fatal, of course. Vanessa Lloyd Platt, senior partner for divorce specialists Lloyd Platt & Co, says: "All they had to produce was a piece of paper from the embassy saying they weren't married to anyone else – but they didn't. Cynics would say that Mick knew. Or perhaps they were both carried away with the passion of marrying in an exotic place, and forgot."

So before you throw that sarong in a suitcase, it's imperative to know just when a marriage means marriage. And when it doesn't. Simply, a foreign wedding is kosher if you abide by that country's rules. Lloyd Platt says: "People have a misconception about marrying in faraway places. It is valid as long as it is recognised by the country in which you married. You have to go through the A to Z of their criteria."

Whether it's in a mud hut in Papua New Guinea or a hotel in Texas, British law will recognise it

as legally binding. Lloyd Platt adds, "You have to go to the consulate and prove that the right number of witnesses were there – usually two – and go through the requisite steps."

Lloyd Platt has seen a steep rise in cases of these sorts, usually where a couple married years ago, often in a tribal ceremony. "Frequently it's because witnesses weren't present. It's devastating for the people involved, and often they only find out when they try to file for divorce."

The only comfort is that now exotic weddings have become so popular – around 10,000 people a year opt for a foreign ceremony – the process is far more well established. Many holiday companies offer wedding packages for around £4,000 a go, all with comprehensive advice on the legal aspects. Some of them, like Thomson, will advise couples what to wear, and even which ceremony to choose; naturally, far too pedestrian an option for the likes of Jerry and Mick.

Still, it would probably have benefited Jerry, now a common-law wife whose criteria for claiming Mick's millions will have to be entirely different. "She'll probably come off worse," says Lloyd Platt. "As a wife, you can claim for pensions and lump sums. As a cohabitee, it depends on her own financial contributions."

All in all, with no more claim to Mick's name than his many and varied flings, Jerry must be regretting that she didn't push the ageing rocker up the aisle, and not on to that plane to Bali.

CLASSIFIED

Legal Notices

THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986
WORLDWIDE INSURANCE GROUP PLC
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to section 84 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named company will be held at 25, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF on 22 January 1999 at 10.00am for the purpose of electing a liquidator to take possession of the assets of the company and to make a statement of affairs to the liquidator.

LICENSING ACT 1964
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR NEW JUSTICES LICENCE
COURT: The Court House, 100, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF. Hearing date: Thursday 4th February 1999 at 10am.
PREMISES: Public Cafe Bar (Currently known as Wine Cellars), 13 High Street, East Greenwich, West Sussex.
APPLICANT: Michael John Clancy.
ADDRESS: Flat 1, 48 Radcliffe Road, Fulham SW6.
TRADE OR CALLING: Area Manager.
TAKE NOTICE that Applicant intends to apply to the Licensing Sub-committee for the grant to him of a Justices' Licence authorising him to sell by retail intoxicating liquor of all descriptions for consumption on or off the above premises.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that should this application be granted then upon the granting of the licence the existing Off Licences will be surrendered.
DATED: 13th January 1999
Pascen & Co.,
Solicitors and Authorised Agents for and on behalf of the said Applicant.

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IRRITATIONS OF MODERN LIFE

26. TRENDY RESTAURANTS BY STUART HUSBAND

REMEMBER THOSE days when you went to a restaurant for a chat, a drink and a decent bit of wholesome, unpretentious grub? Going out for a meal used to be one of those things you just did, an act that was almost rustic in its simplicity.

That, of course, was before the hordes of superchefs and foodie entrepreneurs swept in, demanding culinary "event" temples grandiose enough to match their egos, and the science of getting a table began to involve strategies as fiendishly tortuous as anything a tinpot Latin American dictator could devise (which, come to think of it, could explain a certain general's fondness for dining at the River Café in London).

First, you have to make your booking. This usually involves phoning months ahead to stand any chance of gaining admittance to the most feverishly modish venues (which will undoubtedly be unfashionable by the time you get beyond their portals). You will then be held in a queue, fuming impatiently at a Schubert string quartet while the phone operator counts down the requisite three-and-a-half minutes before deigning to take the call,



Haute cuisine: is it worth the agony?

then gleefully informing you that the establishment is solidly booked until 2003 (the preferred option), or that they could possibly squeeze you in on the preferred date as long as you arrive at 6.32pm precisely and leave no later than 7.45pm. By this time the average caller is so psychologically broken that unbidden tears of gratitude start to flow.

Unfortunately, however, the humiliation is only just beginning. When you arrive at your gastronomic choice you have to negotiate armies of hostile bouncers (the more sadistic of whom may insist on random internal examinations), before being thrust into a

cavernous hangar where you're met by an exquisitely disdainful *maitre d'* who's always taller/thinner/better dressed than you. The journey to your table means running the gauntlet of swearing, sweating sous-chefs glowering from the voguish visible kitchen and may remind you of the scene where Jodie Foster slinks past serial killers' cells in *The Silence of the Lambs*.

When you arrive at your table (under a stairwell, in the teeth of a howling gale between the fire exit and the gents' loo), you embark on the 45-minute wait for your food with only caraway-seeded rosemary and nutmeg bread rolls for sustenance.

Naturally, the food itself comes a long way down the food chain of the dining experience.

The staple "Modern British" fare of these establishments invariably features a salmon fishcake (can anyone remember what we used to eat before the salmon fishcake was thrust upon us?) with accompaniments whose inappropriateness is in direct inverse proportion to their consumability (beds of griddled celeriac, litchi mash, lard shavings).

Not that you'll have a chance to finish it – at the stroke of 7.44pm, those waiters swoop down and frogmarch you out, pausing only for you to stop at the gift shop to buy the souvenir matchbook/ashtray/mug tree of your time spent at Marco Pierre White's or Sir Terence Conran's pleasure. This relic, the proof that you were there, is the gastronomic equivalent of the US Wembley '98 T-shirt, confirming that restaurants really are the new rock'n'roll.

The more faint-hearted among us can only plead indigestion, and join the legions of gastronomic recluses (also known as the Disciples of Delia) who stubbornly insist that Staying In is the new Going Out.



Givenchy's Victorian biker mixes her dress with leather trousers



The rich hippy look from Ungaro takes the coming season's trend for bohemian luxury to new heights

Made-to-measure fantasies

Haute couture is the ultimate extravagance, showing off the skills of the designer even in the more understated creations

It would not be unreasonable to use Alexander McQueen's collection for Givenchy, shown in Paris this week, as a metaphor - albeit an unwitting one on the part of the designer - for haute couture as a whole.

While the ready-to-wear collections in London, Paris, New York and Milan are all about creating a cohesive look and dictating mass-market trends, couture concerns itself only with the crafting of individual pieces. Even the most seemingly minimal garment is worked on for hours, often days, showing off not only the creative abilities of its designer but also the exquisite skills of the atelier as a whole.

McQueen's concept for Givenchy, then, was apposite: an imaginary turn-of-the-century French village inhabited by, among others, "the banker", "the vintner", "the debutante", "the nun" and "the maid" - all dressed in their own, often highly idiosyncratic, way.

First came "the librarian", in strictly tailored little dress - a Givenchy staple by now. Next was the fantasy "schoolmistress", in hour-glass skirt-suit, with four winsome schoolchildren dutifully in tow. The "ribbon-maker", sporting no fewer than 1000 metres of rainbow-coloured laticework, showed off the remarkable skills of the

Givenchy atelier to the full, as did the finest lace and Chinese embroidery on jacket collars and cuffs.

Now, in his fifth season at Givenchy, McQueen has managed to create a distinct identity for the company which is, rather cleverly, very different from that of his signature label. He is, after all, catering to the whims of an entirely different client. In place of raw, often subversive energy, a more gentle, playful spirit has come to the fore. Biker leathers worn under a corseted cassock of a wedding dress were a cute play on tradition, however. And how about an haute couture hooker, her leather skirt so short that stockings top and suspenders were on display?

Donatella Versace, like McQueen, is clearly busy carving out her own identity as opposed to simply following in the footsteps of her late brother Gianni. While she has maintained the fluid glamour - the liquid chainmail, the acres of leather and lace - that was his signature until now, this show saw a move towards a hard-edged aesthetic more reminiscent, some may say, of her brother's work back in the Eighties.

The show was strongest where the designer stuck to what the house does best: leather trouser-suits (and one in inky-black sequins) with the high-octane glamour the client has come to expect from the label. A-line dresses, however, em-

bellished with needles in gleaming metal, glass and wood, seemed more derivative.

Ms Versace has said that her interest lies primarily in the field of fabric development - who else would send out a jacket crafted in stingray-skin, if you please? This alone makes her a designer set to take haute couture into the 21st century.

The mighty Yves Saint Laurent, who closes the proceedings later today, has, even before showing, more than made his mark on other people's runways - most notably those of Jean Paul Gaultier and (less so) John Galiano. In both cases this seemed more like a timely tribute than unscrupulous plagiarism.

Mr Saint Laurent retired from ready-to-wear last October, and it is Gaultier who is rumoured eventually to take over the couture arm of the label. To this end, the Gaultier show seemed almost like a job application: suffice it to say that the powers that be at Saint Laurent will be suitably impressed. Gaultier cuts one of the finest trouser-suits in the business - they looked great in navy crepe, neatly slashed at the shoulder, or plain black, with legs going on for ever. An African theme running through the show was, equally, clearly inspired by Saint Laurent: a wisp of a dress suspended from antique metal collars; another from a gleaming breast-plate. There was

great wit to this collection, too. Gaultier is, after all, a man fast establishing a reputation for modernising haute couture. A stone-washed denim evening dress trimmed with dyed-to-match ostrich plumes brought a smile to even the most silicone-impregnated lips, as did a trouser-suit labelled "the eternal triangle"; the crotch was cut away to reveal black bikini bottoms (triangular) beneath.

The haute couture collections found John Galiano in surrealist mood. At his show for Christian Dior there were jewel-encrusted fastenings shaped like oversized eyes, with clock faces for irises; suits with jackets worn back to front; lob-

sters in place of handbags; even a Magritte lookalike escorting a model to her pedestal centre-stage.

John Galiano, too, looked to Saint Laurent for inspiration. His silhouette was more fluid than Gaultier's, but as long, lean and sinuous as even the most discerning couture customer could wish. This was a landmark collection on the part of this younger but equally influential designer: a return to past, brilliant form. This time, there were happily as many tailored garments in the show as there were bias-cut dresses - Galiano is justly famous for both, though for the past couple of seasons fashion commentators could have been forgiven for forgetting that.

Galiano's interpretation of le smoking was heart-stoppingly beautiful, cut back to front and as lovely (oh, blasphemy), if not more so, than the original that inspired it. Equally gorgeous were black-and-white evening dresses embroidered in the spirit of Jean Cocteau, and a wedding dress with an overblown skirt in Cellophane and tulle that looked like the delicate underside of the world's largest, most immaculate mushroom: Mother Nature was not even a contender.

Galiano has been criticised recently for sacrificing clothing to spectacle, as well as for relying too heavily on fashion history for inspiration. In a brave move, he took his

collection back to the intimate Dior salon, showing (as has Saint Laurent in recent years) to an audience of no more than 60 at a time. If anyone ever doubted that he is a master of his craft, this show proved it.

With millennium fever (yawn) reaching a peak, it would be easy to forget that there is a trusty couture client who prefers not to wear her wealth - or the whims of a designer - quite so blatantly on her sleeve. She is a traditional soul, more comfortable with discreet luxury than with in-your-face ideas. To this end, Valentino didn't disappoint. The Italian designer presides over the largest atelier in the world and this season, as always, the intricacy of craftsmanship was second to none. Ivory skirt-suits with hidden fastenings were embroidered at the waist in the same cool colour, blink and you might have missed it. Little black cocktail dresses with dropped waists seemed simple, only revealing a panel of exquisitely beaded flowers from behind. Another, in beige, was embellished with barely noticeable shell-pink roses.

Emanuel Ungaro has never been a designer for shrinking violets, but these days his work is far more subtle. Gone are the virulent colours, the colliding prints, in favour of a more muted aesthetic. For spring/summer 1999 the designer went for an ethnic look: sari tops, peasant

blouses and full or tiered long skirts. It is all too easy to dismiss designers such as this one as failing to push fashion forward. But to do so would be to ignore an ever-increasing client base, not to mention one that suggests there is more to couture than simply creating an image and selling scent.

Karl Lagerfeld can do little wrong these days. Chanel haute couture stands alone, inasmuch as it is respected not only by the avant garde, but also by its more traditionally minded customer. This season was no exception. Tweedy signature Chanel jackets were narrow but relaxed - more like cardigans, and best worn with wide-legged pants. Colours were the finest of the couture season: dusty rose, primrose, violet and fern. The best thing about the collection was its supreme subtlety: a long-line cardigan was constructed entirely from heads; sequins were opalescent as opposed to dazzling, like fish-skin. Evening-wear came in the form of immaculate column dresses, worn in layers, or - in a Monon des Sources moment - fitted bodices and low-slung, asymmetrically draped, overblown skirts. As I left the show, models mingling all around, I felt two hands on my shoulders. I turned to find Mr Lagerfeld himself behind me.

Touched by the hand of God, in fashion circles, at least.



SUSANNAH FRANKEL
Fashion Editor
reports from Paris



Jean Paul Gaultier



Versace



Chanel



John Galiano for Christian Dior



Valentino

A spiral into terminal decline

The Design Museum's 'Modern Britain' exhibition looks back at the golden era of 20th-century architecture. So why are gems such as the De La Warr pavilion at Bexhill falling into decay? Ask Chris Smith. By Ken Powell

The De La Warr pavilion at Bexhill on Sea might seem a perfect icon for Blairite Britain. Opened in 1936, it was the first truly modern public building in this country – and remains one of the finest. It was inspired by democratic, internationalist ideals, designed by architects who (like Hadid and Libeskind today) were denounced by conservatives as "aliens". It put Bexhill on the world map. It remains a place of pilgrimage for architects and students from many countries. To our shame, however, they find a building which is treated not as a national treasure (though it is Grade I listed) but as a local problem.

The decision of the Arts Lottery, just two months ago, to reject a bid for £16.5m to complete the refurbishment of the building and instead to offer a mere £120,000 to "rescope" the project was a devastating blow. The chief executive of Rother Council, which owns the pavilion and spends £1m a year running it, told the Culture Secretary Chris Smith – who was, to his embarrassment, visiting the building on the day that the Lottery decision was announced – "the decision may have sounded the death knell for the project".

Mr Smith's response has not been made public, but it is the reform of the Lottery under New Labour – away from capital projects and into revenue funding – which has left the De La Warr stranded. While the pavilion's general manager, Caroline Collier, expresses confidence that the necessary funding will be found in the end, "if we behave ourselves", the immediate outlook is rather bleak. The 1,000-seat theatre, in particular, is in such a dire state that it may have to be closed on health and safety grounds. Ironically, at the very time that the De La Warr was turned down by the Lottery, £15 million went to the Dome in nearby Brighton. It looks like a classic case of Lottery blight with money (the Arts Lottery provided £500,000 in 1995 to develop the scheme), and waste of effort.

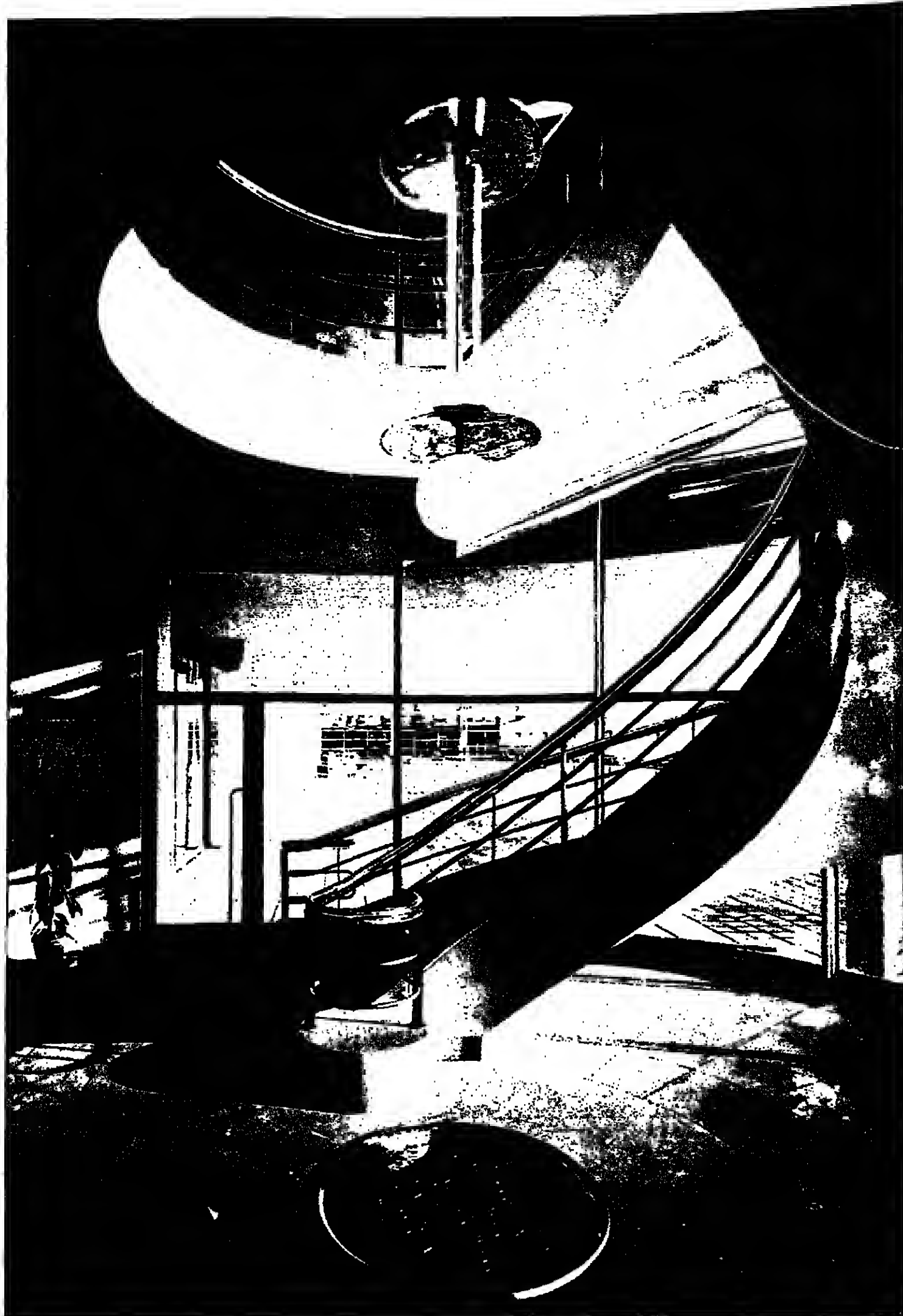
The pavilion is an extraordinary, unlikely object to find in a minor South Coast resort. Not everybody in the town loved it when it was new,

but 60 years later there are residents alive who remember the opening. "The dear old Pav," wrote one of them. "I could fill pages with a list of all the interest, enjoyment and not a little romance that it gave me."

The pavilion was first envisaged as an entertainment hall when a competition for its design was launched in 1933 at the behest of the Earl De La Warr, a progressive whose election as Mayor of Bexhill owed something to his family's extensive land holdings in the town. The competition was won by Erich Mendelsohn, who had quit Nazi Germany (and a highly successful practice), and Serge Chermayeff – born in Chechnya but educated at Harrow and Cambridge and married to a girl he had met at a Sussex tennis party. Bexhill's Mayor envisaged – and got – a thoroughly modern building. Nobody in Bexhill had seen anything like this – except, perhaps, in the Thirties film *Things to Come*.

The building, on a prime site overlooking the Channel, was sleek, dynamic, looking a little like an ocean liner. It was constructed on a steel frame with a flat roof and long bands of windows. Inside were white walls, polished cork or terrazzo floors and furniture of bent wood and stainless steel. The curved staircase was spectacular, with a chrome-plated light 23 feet long hanging in the void. There was a restaurant, complete with a dance floor, a well-stocked reading room and a sun terrace. The flat roof could be used for deck games – the liner analogy again. There was scope for hedonism – and self-improvement. It was a glimpse of the future. "Bexhill has emerged from barbarism at last," declared Bernard Shaw.

The ideals behind the pavilion inspired the new generation of architects who rebuilt Britain after the Second World War. The building itself, however, was damaged in the Blitz. Its steelwork (the architects had originally wanted reinforced concrete) proved vulnerable to the seaside climate. There were alterations, not always in good taste – flock wallpaper and fitted carpet crept in. Partitions and suspended ceilings obliterated sublime spaces. By the Eighties, the pavilion was de-



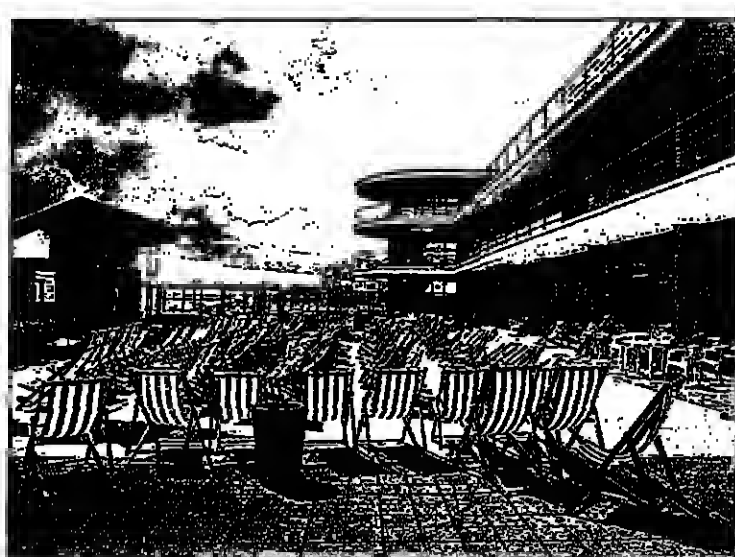
cidedly dowdy and in need of major refurbishment. A local trust, with Liberal councillor Jill Theis as a prime mover, spurred the local authority into action. To its credit, Rother took up the challenge and English Heritage offered a grant for urgent external repairs. The architect John McAslan was appointed in 1991 to repair the fabric and subsequently to masterplan a major refurbishment – the scheme shelved by the Lottery.

McAslan's proposals envisage developing new amenities, including a spacious gallery, and updating those, like the theatre, which already exist. Office and storage space – virtually non-existent – will be provided in a sensitive extension, freeing up the historic interior. Performances by local star Eddie Izzard, tea dances, whist drives and exhibitions of sur-

realist photography can co-exist. Caroline Collier believes, to keep locals happy as well as attract a wider regional audience. Rother council has spent £1.5m on repairs and improvements since 1990. Now, not unreasonably, it expects national backing for the Pav. It should receive it – and quickly.

'Modern Britain: 1929-1939', sponsored by The Independent, is at the Design Museum, London SE1, from today (0171-378 6055)

The De La Warr pavilion overlooks the Channel and resembles an ocean liner. Its interior includes a spiral staircase, and a 23-foot chrome-plated light. Hulton



Dream a tiny dream

POP
THE CORRS
CARDIFF INTERNATIONAL ARENA

IT'S TEMPTING to look for sociological reasons for the incredible commercial success of the Dundalk sibling combo – best-selling recording artists of 1998, with an album that's about to go octuple-platinum (that's eight times 300,000). Is it due to a symbolic reassertion of good old-fashioned family values, the enduring appeal of all things Irish, or the group's canny positioning in the newly resurgent pop market as a contemporary equivalent to the AOR of Seventies Fleetwood Mac, only without the marital strife and heavy rock pretensions?

The answer, however, appears to be far more simple: The Corrs are very attractive, very very good and fairly undemanding, which can be a devastating combination when coupled with the resources of a megacorp record company. Traditional Irish instruments lend a welcome human feel to the digital thumps of the group's borrowing from dance music – which are more chip than hip hop – and they sing real songs with real voices in a very appealing way. But could they big up their live act to fill an arena? And, more seriously, could they make you forget that parody on French and Saunders' Christmas special, where The Corrs were shown as clones?

That they succeeded on both counts so emphatically was due not only to their considerable personal charm but to their prowess as musicians. Lead singer Andrea doesn't just look gorgeous on the video screens; she plays a mean penny whistle. Sister Caroline whacks the drum kit with all the conviction of Prince's Sheila E, and Sharon's fiddle playing would not be disgraced in the best west of Ireland traditional music bars. And brother Jim? Not only is he loved by all the girls in the audience, and their nuns, a solo spot playing a traditional air on piano showed he was not just a pretty face.

While the response of the audience to all this was muted to begin with, the onset of some anthemic double-time fiddling provokes outbreaks of raver dancing. When the lights are flashed in the audience's faces it's the cue for wholesale jigs and reels. By the last number – the cover of Fleetwood Mac's "Dreams" – everyone is on their feet. For the first encore, all hands are raised.

While the mechanics of arena performance perhaps inevitably tends towards the Pavlovian, the response The Corrs get really does seem to be due to the stimulus of their impeccably professional performance, and not just a given. The venue might be dehumanised, but they are not.

A second encore of another traditional reel emphasises the group's by now rather urbanised folk roots, and it's a very happy crowd that leaves for home. But while The Corrs are genuinely talented and their performance undeniably impressive, by the end of the evening a cynic might feel that the overall menu offer is just too sweet, smooth and anodyne for all but the most democratic of tastes. I left yearning for something harsh, nasty and dirty all the way home.

PHIL JOHNSON

BEST PLAY OF THE YEAR EVENING STANDARD AWARDS 1998

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Circles in the sand

DANCE

SANKAI JUKU
SADLER'S WELLS
LONDON



YOU CAN scarcely tell, as the light gradually comes up at the beginning of *Shijima*, whether the figure posed high up against the back wall is a man or a statue. Only very slowly does Ushio Amagatsu give away the secret, by moving first his arms, then his head, and finally his whole body. This extremely gentle, tardy movement sets the tone for the whole piece, and one benefit of it is that when, eventually, Amagatsu momentarily flicks his hand, or even runs across the width of the stage, the contrast of pace has a startling effect.

The theme of the production seems to be the relationship of life, death and creativity. I say "seems" because the title gives nothing away (it translates as "the darkness calms down in space") and the programme note is so obscure that it only confuses the issue.

But Amagatsu and his four acolytes enact episodes that relate to the repeated patterns of a man's back, which are spread right across the walls behind and beside the stage, and there are indications of aspiration, exhaustion and crucifixion. A struggle to survive and to make

lasting artefacts is implied throughout the action.

Previous visits by this group, Sankai Juku, have revealed similar devices: the shaven heads, the white paint on face and body, the white or pale costumes, the minimal movement. Again there are seven scenes (is this a magic number for Amagatsu?) lasting about 90 minutes, with no interval.

This time there is less of the amusing eccentricity of earlier shows (the peacock strutting around the stage in *Kinkon Shonen*, the pool which men fell into in *Unetsu*), but the sparseness of *Shijima*

compels attention and urges the exercise of imagination. Sand is a motif, spread on the floor, kicked up by their feet, or falling on them unexpectedly from above. Think, maybe, of ashes to ashes – but that could be misleading.

Is this all too enigmatic? One or two spectators who left quietly during the evening's early stages apparently thought so, but at the end there was loud cheering from those willing to accept the highly individual and allusive work. Except for the musical soundtrack by Yas-Kaz and Yoichiro Yoshikawa, which provides an atmospheric background and marks the change from one section to another, *Shijima* is virtually a one-man show with Amagatsu as author, director, choreographer, designer and chief performer. Even the four men who form a supporting group seem like extensions of Amagatsu, not exactly duplicates but close to it. What turns them into disciples of this man? Presumably his intensity and originality, which are what appeal to audiences too.

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Hang on to your hats

MUSIC

TARAF DE HAÏDOUKS
RONNIE SCOTT'S
LONDON

THE 12 men in ill-fitting suits and pork-pie hats left Romania in the wee hours of yesterday morning, and would rather kip in the corner of Ronnie Scott's than do anything so formal as tune up. The Taraf de Haïdouks' resultant cacophony is, it turns out, merely a prelude to a lengthy set brimming with passion, melodrama and jaw-dropping talent. The older members deliver songs of love and loss in guttural howls with cheese-grater voices, before the ensemble breaks down into smaller groups for increasingly competitive and complex instrumental numbers. In showcasing individual skills on fiddle, flute, double bass, accordion and the rippling sounds of the cymbalom, things career along at such a breakneck pace that all tonight's largely "world music" audience can do is hold on for the ride.

The Taraf hail from Clejani, a run-down Gypsy village south west of Bucharest that is home to over 50 *lăutari*, the professional musicians who follow village traditions and perform at weddings and other celebrations. This lot are the cream, a multi-generational line-up of larynx-wobbling vir-

tuoses who tackle everything from medieval ballads to berserk dance tunes. With an Arabic flavour reflecting their Gypsy origins, these unlikely lads are also showmen, whose party pieces – squeaking out an entire number on a stray violin string, for example – were milked for all they were worth. The Taraf found fame in the West after the fall of Ceausescu (to whom they dedicate a song, "The Ballad of the Dictator"), by touring the festival circuit, playing with the Kronos Quartet and Yehudi Menuhin, and releasing extraordinary collections of vernacular music. Their third and latest album, *Dumbula Dumba* (Crammed Discs) – which begins with barking dogs, and whose sleeve notes name-check Clejani's bartender – is helped along by a series of *musufiri*, or village guests, including descendants of the ancient order of bear-tamers on barrels, chairs, spoons and various body parts.

Tonight, however, it's just the regular Taraf, their battered instruments, and Calu, a Brylcreemed show-stealer on violin whose lightning-fast fingering should have left his strings smoking. Proceedings take on a dainty, soulful, Fellini-esque delirium: fiddles are smacked with bows, double basses are plucked, beer bellies become accessories in impromptu solo dances and duets offer a chance to settle grudges.

They escape the confines of folklore thanks to the elders' love of improvisation (the only conceivable link between the Taraf and this week's venue) and the more youthful members' drive to innovate. The resultant face-offs between the former's traditional rhythms and songs and the latter's predilection for Turkish, Serbian and Bulgarian sounds imbues the whole shebang with a creative frisson that keeps things fluid and fresh. Both exhilarating and exhausting, it's a window into a way of life which, by their very presence, the Taraf are helping to keep alive. None of them, apparently, can read or write. No matter: they can certainly play.

JANE CORNWELL

Dream
a tiny
dream

POP

THE CORRS

A word from the wise

Playwright Peter Gill may not be a household name but he's a force to be reckoned with. And when it comes to the direction of British theatre, he's not a man to keep his opinions to himself. By David Benedict

When his first play, *A Sleep-er's Den*, was first performed as a one-off at the Royal Court in 1966, Peter Gill was too nervous to watch. Afterwards, the artistic director George Devine found him hiding in the wardrobe department. Gill needn't have worried, however. Devine immediately encouraged him to write more.

Since then he has produced a small but impressive body of work bearing his quietly distinctive stamp. Two years ago, in a particularly adroit meeting of minds, he wrote a remarkably airy and elegant translation of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* for the RSC. Even working from the inspiration of another playwright, the hallmarks of his own writing were there. Unfashionably quiet, beautifully composed and emotionally acute, *Small Change*, *Kick for Touch*, and last year's *Cardiff East* all resonate in the memory, thanks to their remarkable compassion and linguistic finesse. There's more where that came from in *Certain Young Men*, his latest play which is about to open at the Almeida.

The kneejerk response to the choice of venue is that there must be a part for a Hollywood lead. Wrong. With the possible exception of Jeremy Northam, the eight actors Gill has assembled are not well known. Yet casting is unlikely to have been a problem as good actors feast upon his theatrically generous writing but not because of traditionally juicy, grandstanding lead roles. Gill's almost musical prose is pared right down – all the better to act upon – and narratives are shared, every part balanced to create an emotional whole. If that sounds elusive, try the forthright line from *Certain Young Men* being used in the publicity: "What are two grown men doing living together faking all the stupidities of a fake straight relationship?"

The nature and boundaries of love both gay and straight have proved fertile territory for Gill. *Mean Tears* examined the relationships between a bisexual object of affection (played to feckless perfection by Bill Nighy in the original National Theatre production), two male friends and two women. In retrospect, it summed up the mood of the Eighties. Is *Certain Young Men* doing the same for the Nineties? "Not in any conscious way," equivocates Gill, warily. "Mean Tears was written in, but not about, the Eighties. But looking back, that was a horrible period. Maybe that's why the relationships in it are so destructive. This play is definitely set in London, now. Inevitably, I suppose, I talk about specifics. I think I do tend to do this whether I know it or not."

Gill's writing has run parallel to a distinguished directing career. Less well known is that he started out as an actor. He became interested in theatre while growing up in Cardiff at the time of rock'n'roll. "Our grammar school had the working-class and lower middle-class Catholic boys in Cardiff. The posh ones went to Ampleforth and Downside." A couple of responsive teachers allowed them to put on a play and, gradually, acting became the obvious next step. "I was rather good at it, I thought. Of course I wasn't really." Good enough, however, to get into the local drama school alongside one Anthony Hopkins.

His professional career took him



"There's no rape and no one kills themselves": Peter Gill in rehearsal for his new play 'Certain Young Men'

to the Royal Court in the early Sixties and to the RSC for a short spell. However, the Court proved an eye-opener and together with Stephen Frears – who later made his name directing the films *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Dangerous Liaisons*, both written by Royal Court proteges – he returned as an assistant director. "At the age of 24 I recognised I was not going to be the sort of actor I wanted to be. I was interested in theatre, not just acting. I always wanted to go to the other rehearsals. I'd realised I was interested in this thing of the director, the holder of the interpretive idea."

These were the Court's glory days. Devine was at the helm, but the influential directorial triumvirate of Lindsay Anderson, Bill Gaskill and Anthony Page was there too. Gill did a couple of Joe Orton's early plays but really made his mark resuscitating the neglected plays of DH Lawrence. "I don't want to get nostalgic about it because it was also a very difficult time, but there was a consensus between the director, the writer, the actor and the designer. All parties got treated badly, right? But there was a profound bond between those factors."

Consequently, he's worried by what he sees as the dissolution of the

power of writers and actors. "There was a brief time when the play was what was important. That meant that you could put up with people's ambition. In the Eighties, ambition itself became a laudable thing. My generation thought it was deeply uncool to use the word 'career'."

He concedes that the climate is different now because there are many more writers. "And directors," he adds, sternly. "Directing is now seen as a separate creative art."

"These days a lot of so-called auteurs can't direct. Particularly with a new play, they don't know what to do. They think that directing a new play is getting it rewritten, which is a grave mistake"

This business of auteurship has crept in. Unquestionably, the director is a very important person and very creative. It goes without saying that if you can direct you will have personally, but part of your job is to try and get rid of it. This usually soft-spoken man is firing on all cylinders now. "These days, lots of so-called auteurs can't direct anything. Particularly with a new play, they don't know what to do, what the

skill is. They think directing a new play is getting it re-written, which is a grave mistake."

In a world of literary departments and script editors, this is heresy. "It's not that I think you shouldn't rewrite. It's the cult of rewrites... the fact that something is there so that people who can't write can have views. It's just a world full of endless, endless opinions. Really, what's good about a new play is what's good about it and what's bad

up the National Theatre Studio, from 1977 he was the founder director of Hammersmith's Riverside Studios, which for almost 10 years was unquestionably the country's most exciting venue, with an unparalleled profile for drama, dance and art. It opened its doors to major international companies. Beckett rehearsed in the building. There were landmark stagings of *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Changeling* (with Helen Mirren)

management has been visited upon a perfectly well-run profession that kept going without public subsidy for hundreds of years. It's incredibly annoying. Nobody minds working hard but the Arts Council's 'tick the boxes' culture is killing anybody with any flair." He's thoroughly exasperated. "You have to have management, of course you do. But I resent being forced to jump through all these hoops. Being told you're not practical. How can you get a play written if you're not practical?"

Unofficially, he's slightly nervous about how his new play will be received. "There's no rape and nobody kills themselves," he says mock gloomily. But in terms of the bigger picture, he's surprisingly sanguine about the future, thanks to the resurgence in playwriting. "Whether I like all these new plays is neither here nor there, it's the fact that they haven't been seen off. People like them. Playwriting is at the root of British theatre. I exploded at someone the other day, explaining that Shakespeare's Globe was a new writing theatre. It's not some invention of the Arts Council."

'Certain Young Men' previews at the Almeida, London N1 (0171-359 4404) from tomorrow

What really matters

REVIEW

IN FLAME
THE BUSH, LONDON

THE *PIECE de résistance* of Charlotte Jones's compellingly quirky new play is a tap-shoe shuffle to "I Could Have Danced All Night", performed by Annie, an elderly stroke-victim with Alzheimer's. If it seemed even momentarily exploitative, the effect would be disastrous. But Annie's moment of glory is so little out of step with the batty behaviour of the other characters, that it feels both daft and touching.

In *Flame* confirms what Jones's first play, *AirSwimming*, suggested: this 30-year-old playwright – a former actress – has a peculiar talent for a dramatic locale where the pitiful and the prattish converge. It's a talent well served by Anna Mackmin's superbly paced and acted production.

Staged in a white, minimalist interior, it juxtaposes two sets of lives from opposite ends of the century and country – Thackley, Yorkshire in 1909 and London, 1999. Given the arrangement of the narrative, this might seem a dangerously schematic interpretation, but the underlying interest in the frustrated hopes of successive generations of women is strikingly inconclusive, carefully reluctant to frame things in terms of progress.

Scenes are fleeting, like the snapshots taken at Thackley Fair in the play's pivotal scene. For the women photographed, there are recorded moments of doomed happiness – Livvy and her "idiot" sister, Clara, both seduced by the roguish photographer, Frank, whose fake Italian accent spuriously promises broader horizons than those of their hard-bitten, disapproving Gramma. For Alex, a cartographer in her mid-thirties weighed down by her relationships with her mother Annie, whom she has placed in care, her moony flat-mate Clotie, and Mat – a married man – the yellowing family prints she's discovered provide a vaguely consoling source of identification.

Most of the roles are doubled up with the cast swiftly and deftly negotiating between the two eras, with Jones's clipped dialogue amusingly expressive of brittle, "making do" mentalities and seething jealousies. This is most perfectly realised in Rosie Cavaliero's combined *tour de force* as the skirt-tugging, oafishly grinning Clara – and the hapless oerotic, Clotie.

Jones gives some of the lowliest one-liners to Marcia Warren's bilious Gramma/Annie. "Tuesday's child is full of shit," the latter snaps when Alex pays a visit. She is as subtly outspoken as Gramma, sniping at the hypochondriac dullard (Tom Smith: excellent) who has set his cap at Livvie.

The cruelies can, at times, seem contrived for our delight – just as some of the incidental speeches and plot points can seem interposed simply to give the actors more to chew on. But other moments have lasting poignancy.

When at the end, the worlds merge and a gentle Gramma whispers to a sobbing, defeated Alex, "None of it matters," the words have an extraordinary effect: a semi-serious dismissal that fully acknowledges the seriousness of life and suggests that, finally, a sense of the ridiculous is our only weapon.

DOMINIC CAVENDISH

Tu 6 Feb (0181-743 3388)

DEBUT: DAVID WESTHEAD

The role: Beelzebub in Actors Touring Company's *Faustus*
The year: 1987

WHEN I left RADA at the age of 24 the RSC offered me a contract to play small roles and understudy, but I was convinced I was going to get a job at the Traverse in Edinburgh so I turned them down. Then the Traverse role fell through and I was out of work for four months, a situation that encapsulates what you go through as an actor – most of the time having to take difficult decisions, and making a balls-up of it.

But I got exactly the sort of job I was looking for in a three-man version of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* by Mark Brickman that the Actors Touring Company were doing – which meant assuming a dozen guises, from the Pope to the King of Hungary.

Touring is the most knacker-like kind of theatre you'll ever do, and we went to about 50 or 60 over three months. Once you've hugged the set in and put all the lights up, the show itself is a breather.



There was a rebellion fairly early on when we decided that there was far too much superfluous scenery knocking around and that we would conjure it in the audience's imagination rather than lug it in from the transit van. So the surgical skeletons that had been stuck on to sheets with gaffer tape were bundled away and not seen until we hit the Lyric Hammersmith. Ironically, on the press night the simplest part of the design – a table –

broke 25 minutes before the end. I had to keep whispering to the others not to climb on it. Luckily, the critics didn't seem to notice.

The performance that stands out for me, though, was in Hereford. It was at the local cinema – they took the screen up for the evening – and it was opposite Hereford United Football Ground. Hereford happened to be playing Nottingham Forest that day. You couldn't hear a bloody thing because the crowd was making so much noise. There were only about 16 people in the audience, but that was some achievement. We raised our voices and persevered.

Somehow that evening brought home to me the fact that as an actor you learn most when you go to the audience rather than when the audience comes to you. You have to go out there and earn the right to be on their turf.

David Westhead stars as Robbie in *Talk of the City*, previewing from 3 Feb, Young Vic, London, SE1 (0171-928 6363)

Bedfellows in bedlam

REVIEW

THE GLORY OF LIVING
ROYAL COURT AT THE AMBASSADORS, LONDON

THE POTENTIAL trouble with American trailer-trash drama is that it will pander to an audience's worst impulses, inviting them on a tourist trip to a southern states bedlam where they can snigger in safe superiority at the morally subnormal. Rebecca Gilman's bracing, jet black comedy, *The Glory of Living*, never allows you that easy response, nor does Kathryn Hunter's production, which brilliantly reinforces the sense of casual shock.

We first meet 15-year-old Lisa (Monica Dolan) in her mother's mobile home chatting to Clint (Tony Curran), a jailbird twice her age. On the other side of a sheet strung across the room, his friend and her prostitute mother are having noisy sex. "She fakes it... she tole me," announces Lisa, an unstable cocktail of emotional damage, knee-hugging childishness and sullen precocity in Dolan's superb performance.

Then, in the space of about a minute's stage time, Clint and Lisa



Trailer trash: Monica Dolan and Tony Curran Geraint Lewis

have stripped one another, climbed into a motel bed and been propelled a couple of years forward. They are now married; he's been in jail again; she's had twins. You are just recovering from this series of jolts, when there's another. They aren't alone. When Clint pulls up the handcuffed, unconscious body of an underage girl, it begins to dawn on you that Lisa is acting as his procuress and that when he needs to dispose of the evidence, he is careful to ensure that it's not his finger on the trigger.

Hunter's production moves with

a darkly witty flow, the actors shifting scenes before your very eyes, as when a furious Clint simultaneously runs amok at being arrested and clears the set for the next episode. It is full of telling touches. For example, when Lisa decides to inform the police anonymously about the corpses, her message begins as a voice-over, and this sense that she is not so much behaving morally as obeying dissociated voices in her head is strikingly apt.

The play brings out the dreadful yet pitiable confusion inside her.

One second she is refusing to cooperate with the police; the next, she is so naively flattered that they recorded her calls to them, that she's all perky helpfulness. She is the baffling product of a sleazy world where it's considered "nice and family-like" to be more than two to a bed, of bad children's homes and of crap TV culture where the kindest thing you can say about your murder victim is that she looked like Joanie from *Happy Days*.

Was Lisa free to refuse to do Clint's bidding if she had wanted? The evidence is conflicting. Certainly there is a bleak integrity about her in the later stages that is preferable to her partner's rattily macho, self-serving cunning, so well communicated in Mr Curran's performance. Only the tentatively humanising bond at the end between Lisa and her lawyer (Lorcan Cranitch) as he teaches her how to play "Jingle Bells" oo her toy piano, struck the one false, sentimental note. The rest, from the spot-on cast to the evocative set with its doors dangling on telegraph wires, is unreservedly recommended.

PAUL TAYLOR

Tu 6 Feb (0171-565 5000)



It's cheaper than you might think to arrange adequate cover for valuables, antiques or collectables, such as these Clarice Cliff plates

Phil Meech

The art of insurance

Terrified of displaying your treasures? You don't need to be. By John Andrew

Phil and Ruth had a dilemma. For years they had been collecting antiques, and they knew that they were grossly under-insured. Their home contents were covered by a standard household policy. Years ago the insurers had required an alarm to be installed and quality locks to be fitted to all exterior doors and windows. The couple had no problems with this, which they regarded as sensible security measures. But they did not like the restrictions on the value of certain items, mainly silver, which could be left out of their safe. And over the years this was increasingly ignored.

They were horrified to discover that after a burglary at the home of friends, the insurance company would not pay out because the teenage son had forgotten to set the alarm before going to bed. It then dawned on Phil and Ruth that despite paying hefty insurance premiums, in the event of their suffering a break-in their own cover was next to useless. Apart from being under-insured, they were also in breach of the terms of their policy because they had more than the permitted value of items in a display cabinet.

Realising that their situation was foolhardy, they decided to take action and approached an insurance broker with a company that had a thorough understanding of the antique and art markets. Instead of being covered by a standard household contents policy, they were now insured under a specialised valuables policy. Much to their surprise, they were able considerably to increase their cover while reducing

who can benefit from specialised cover. David Needham, of the insurance brokers Needham Jobson, considers that most people who have home contents of £75,000 or more could take advantage. "This is because at this level their contents will inevitably include art and antiques," he says. Petty criminals find consumer durables such as videos more appealing; consequently the premiums for fine

high value of contents are less likely than average to make false claims. They are also more likely to be more security-conscious. Do not make the mistake of thinking that the lower premiums for specialised cover mean a lower level of service. In fact, it is much higher than with a standard policy. Whether arranged direct with an insurance company, or through an insurance broker, the client is

good 24-hour portage in an apartment block can keep burglars at bay. On the other hand, home-owners who are casual, in the sense that they leave windows open or allow unknown workmen in the house unsupervised, are more likely to suffer losses. With a specialised policy, the cover of contents is on a system of agreed values. This means that in the majority of cases, any claim for losses is met immediately and in full. Although not a strict policy in all cases, specialist insurers often prefer the contents to be professionally valued in cases where there is a high proportion of antiques. Since values can change around £600 a day for their services, this does increase the outlay in the first year. However, even with this additional expense, specialist cover can still prove to be less expensive than standard cover from year one.

Insurance companies: Cox Underwriting Services Limited 01608 649000; Nordstern Art Insurance 0171-626-3001. Brokers: Needham Jobson & Co 0171-533-8340; Realty Insurance 0171-499-7874; HSBC Gibbs 0171-661-2386

With a specialised policy, the cover of contents is agreed – which means claims for losses are met immediately and in full

their premium. Furthermore, there were no restrictions on the value of items that could be left on display – and they were also covered in the event of failing to set the alarm at night, or when leaving home.

Not only were there no annoying restrictions, but, in the event of an item being broken, the company would pay for its restoration and reimburse the difference between its value before and after restoration. It is not just antique collectors

treated as an individual. Before a quotation is given, the customer will be visited at home and their precise requirements discussed. While this may sound like an unnecessary nicety, it allows for an assessment of an essential element – the insured's lifestyle. A home that has people living in it for most of the time is less likely to be broken into than one which is left unoccupied during the day, at evenings or at weekends. Similarly, a dog or

marketing director at Ipswich. Opting for a fixed-rate Tessa would give some security against rates becoming uncompetitive, says Philippa Gee.

When choosing a variable-rate Tessa, advisers warn against simply picking the institution at the top of the best-buy table. Piers White says that some providers are paying Tessa rates significantly above bank base rates, which means they are making a loss that they will be unable to maintain. He recommends opting for a provider with a record of paying good rates across all savings products.

Tessas are worthwhile only if they are held by taxpayers, since non-taxpayers do not have to pay tax on their savings. But Ms Gee says that couples sometimes seem to forget this, and it is the non-taxpayer who holds the Tessa.

"It is great that people have become educated to put investments into the non-taxpayer's name, but not in the case of Tessas," she says.

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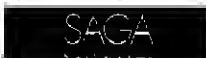
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The great dividend dilemma

HELEN, 31, is a computer programmer and, having worked as a permanent member of staff since leaving university, she switched to contracting about six months ago.

Her first contract, for £1,200 per week, was for three months and this has just been renewed. She expects this to continue at least for another year or two.

Helen has bought a limited company "off the shelf" and the contract money goes to the company. On her accountant's advice she takes an annual salary of £6,000 and the rest is paid to her as quarterly dividends. This has the advantage of saving National Insurance (NI) contributions, which are payable on salary but not dividends.

She and her boyfriend have £2,400 for emergencies and holidays in a joint instant-access account. Helen also has her own account with the Nationwide and has built up £3,500 since she started contracting. Some of this money, however, will be needed to pay tax bills.

Helen's main concern is about pensions. She built up a respectable pension fund with her last employer (the only one to

provide a pension scheme) and has contracted out of the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme (SERPS). Now she needs to arrange her own plan and has come to us for a personal pension plan. She feels that she could easily afford £400 per month.

We looked into Helen's company scheme and the personal pension she used to contract out of SERPS (called a "protected rights" plan). We also checked the terms and rates of her savings accounts.

Her company scheme was a "money purchase" plan. This means that she and her former employer had paid into a pension fund and this would grow over the years and be used to buy an income in retirement. We reviewed the charges and the performance record of the investment managers who ran the fund.

For Helen's new pension contributions we hit an immediate – and not uncommon – problem. She is only allowed to put 17.5 per cent of her salary into a personal pension – dividends must be ignored. She could therefore only pay £675 monthly (17.5 per cent of £3,900) – much less than what she wanted to contribute and needed for a good level of income.

THE FIXERS



FIONA PRICE

One option would be for Helen to increase her salary to around £25,000 (and reduce her dividends accordingly). However, this would mean higher NI contributions.

Alternatively Helen could consider an executive pension plan (EPP). An EPP is similar to a personal pension in many ways – you build up a pension pot with an insurance company and the charges are similar – but the contributions and benefits are different as it is considered an employer's pension scheme.

An EPP allows much higher contributions to be paid in by the employer, in Helen's case, around £175 pm. If she were to increase

her salary, to around £14,000, then she would be permitted to contribute £400 pm.

Having contracted out of SERPS, the Department of Social Security (DSS) was rebating some of Helen's NI contributions into a personal pension of her choice. Now her salary was much lower than before (as above, dividends are ignored), her rebates were significantly reduced.

We therefore needed to check whether it was still worthwhile contracting out – often this is not worthwhile on low salaries. We also checked the charges and performance of the plan. Helen's company scheme and protected rights personal pension were both good arrangements. The charges were low and the investment performance had been excellent.

We suggested that Helen increase her annual salary to around £14,000 in order to be able to pay £400 monthly into an EPP. This would mean she would have to pay extra NI contributions but would be able to save 40 per cent tax on her pension contributions. It also meant that her DSS rebates to her protected rights personal pension would increase from around £110 to around £450,

making it worthwhile continuing to contract out.

We selected a "level costed" plan where the charges are taken out evenly over the term of the plan. As there are no up-front charges Helen would not be penalised if she needed to stop, reduce or transfer her plan.

We gave serious consideration to recommending two schemes rather than one. However, she already had reasonably large funds with two other companies – with her former employer's scheme and her protected rights personal pension – so we felt there was already an adequate spread.

Helen was pleased that her existing pensions and savings were doing well. However, she hadn't realised the implications of paying herself a low salary and taking the majority of her income in the form of dividends. Although tax efficient, this policy caused problems with her pension planning. With some advice, that problem has now been minimised.

Fiona Price is managing director at Fiona Price & Partners, independent financial advisers, 33 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AA (0171-430 0366)

Budgeting for the future

The task of budgeting, usually seen in a negative light, can benefit from more effective software which emphasises the need for analysis of future trends. By Roger Trapp

In most organisations, "budget" is a dirty word. Widely perceived as a means for headquarters staff to control costs, the whole process of budgeting in a company inevitably tends to be seen in a negative light by managers who insist that they are given insufficient funds to do what they are trying to do.

But Hyperion Solutions, one of the key providers of business analysis software, is adamant that this does not have to be the case. Indeed, it believes that it can help add value to a much derided activity.

The company - created last summer by the merger of Hyperion and Arbor - recently carried out research in conjunction with Financial Director magazine and found that many companies were not gaining full advantage from the budgeting process.

This failure was attributed to "procedural inefficiencies and a dearth of specialist IT systems capable of harnessing the potential of information contained in the budgeting process".

Hyperion feels it can help solve both problems. The means is "Pillar 4", the latest version of its well known software package for budgeting, planning and forecasting.

The product is, it says, "designed to deal with these problems enabling finance departments to use the budgeting process to improve efficiency and increase competitive advantage in the organisation, while reducing the time spent budgeting".

Tony Speakman, UK marketing director for Hyperion, sees giving managers "tools that are sharp enough to do the job" as a way of getting them to look upon budgeting more positively. If people at divisional level are able to "own" the modelling process, they are more likely to spend time on it, he says.

software has been available for a while, but this latest version should enable managers to see more clearly how their businesses fit within the overall corporation.

As Mr Speakman points out, the package has a "spreadsheet front end" to make it familiar to users. But "the value is in what underlies it". In short, Hyperion makes it easier for companies to carry out such tasks as remuneration planning, sales forecasting and manufacturing budgeting, as well as allowing for more sophisticated analysis of existing business and likely trends.

The company describes how such organisations as the financial services group the Halifax has used the system to reduce the time spent on collecting spreadsheets from a few days to as little as three-quarters of an hour, while Avon Cosmetics has seen it as a method of rationalising the budgeting and planning process.

But the real value of the enhancements goes beyond specific enhancements, argues Mr Speakman. Andrew Savers, editor of Financial Director, explains that "the research drew a worrying picture of dissatisfaction with the budgeting process, and a lack of ability to utilise it properly into the business planning process".

In particular, it was found that more than half the time spent by a finance department on the budget is in the mechanics of putting it together, with only 27 per cent of the time spent on analysis and other means of adding value. If budgeting manages to shake off that onerous aspect and become a genuine way of looking at the prospects for the business - and the best means of serving them - it could shed its poor image. And if, by using Hyperion's packages and other technological developments, it becomes more attractive, it can be used to expand the business rather than just as a means of reducing costs.

"We're helping complex businesses use technology to develop the business, rather than fight the numbers," says Mr Speakman.



The Chancellor of the Exchequer may ultimately call the tune, but skilled budgeting can make the best of a company's assets
Mike Moore/Daily Mirror

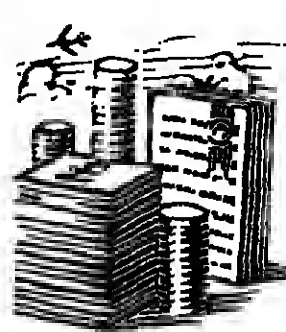
The new golf

YOU CAN annoy a lot of people at the moment just by humming "The Girl from Ipanema". Still, it seems fairly obvious that if you go around punting vast sums of money on an economy as stable as Brazil's, you've got to expect the occasional shake-down. I mean, if it were a person instead of a country, the bank manager would have stepped in long ago with the scissors and cut up the credit card. But there you go: if you're going to burrow, it's always easier to do it on an epic and totally unrealistic scale.

Luckily, things seem a little calmer this week, even if the FX boys still wince at mentions of Rio, so there's been the odd moment for chatting. Things have brightened up on the personal front ever since Olivier decided to believe the story - importantly, the true one - of how Jaap's watch found its way to my bedside table, and having clambered out of my pit of despair I'm able to notice what's happening around me.

Findlay, our resident mathematical genius, is normally a quiet type with an arid sense of humour, prone to making odd little comments in such a quiet voice that it takes a few seconds before you realise he's said anything at all, and a few seconds more before you realise how funny it is. I imagined he spent his spare time playing chess or writing computer code, but it seems I am wrong. For Findlay has taken up hang-gliding.

"It's excellent. You really should give it a go," he coos. "It's so peaceful up there. All this lot" - he waves at the screens around us - "seems very insignificant." Laura and I wince at each other. The thought of hanging from a kite several hundred feet from the ground doesn't appeal much, and I'm surprised Findlay has taken it up. Then I remember it's practically compulsory these days for a single man with a



THE TRADER

City career to take up at least one life-threatening sport.

"I can't say I'm in any hurry to join in," I tell Laura. "I'd spend the whole time thinking about Icarus instead of 'becoming one with the wind', as Findlay puts it."

"Except that Icarus flew too close to the sun," Laura replies. "This is Britain, remember. You'd be perfectly safe most of the year. Mind you, if you flew too close to Beachy Head, you'd probably find some distraught trader and that wouldn't be much fun." And we settle down to consider some of life's mysteries, such as why you'd work 14-hour, high-stress days so you could retire early and then risk all of it by taking up some dodgy activity like rappelling or hang-gliding.

"Adrenalin junkies," I say. "They get so hooked on the stuff because of work that they need more and more excitement outside as well. So they play heart-pounding computer games and throw themselves off mountains at any opportunity." We murmur sagely about how clever we are not to spend our money in such a rash way, when the head of trading appears round the corner on one of his rare visits.

"Hang on!" he yells. "You'll be joining us all hang-gliding again this weekend, I hope?" Laura and I look mournfully at each other. Dangerous sports: they're the new golf.

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Closing Date: 15th February 1999.

The change in Scotland has been amazing

I WORK FOR...

STEPHEN NOON IS PA TO ALEX SALMOND MP, THE LEADER OF THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL PARTY

When I was younger the SNP had only 7 per cent of the vote and were generally seen as leftists and extremists; we used to call them the Scottish Nose-Pickers. I was always political, and joined the young Conservatives while at school because I was impressed by Thatcher's belief that everyone could stand on their own two feet. Gradually I made my conversion, applying this philosophy to the Scottish people who, I believed, could stop blaming the English for everything and learn to take power into their own hands. After the appointment of the 1992 general election I joined an organisation called Scotland United and became its radical. I chained myself in Westminster Abbey and a year later, after the budget, did the me thing to the gates of Downing Street. Afterwards Alex Salmond invited us for a drink in the House of Commons. He likes people with a bit of get up and go and non-conformity; why have conservative people working for you when your objectives are so radical?

The SNP are revolutionaries; I want to change the destiny of 5 million, but those who try to claim it with us on the basis of racial purity or some bronze-age fluff are missing the point entirely. I'm not a nationalist, I am an internationalist. *Trainspotting* was a hugely influential film for my generation; our hearts stopped when we heard Ewan McGregor's character say that he hated the Scots for the fact that they allowed someone else to colonise and rule them. It isn't an anti-Scottish or anti-Irish message; it was just the truth, and it made us think.

While working as a guide on the 'Outs and Ghosts' tour in Edinburgh I was asked to join the SNP. Their press officer who heard my e-and-brimstone account of the misadventure of Canongate, the story of a young man who was eaten alive by the Union was signed. Since I was studying 18th-century Scottish history, I worked for the party on a voluntary, part-time basis. One of the things about Alex is that he encourages his staff to look for talent in his young supporters. He liked to meet me and let me know that he was a taxi driver to his house, and by the time we arrived he had offered me the job of part-time personal assistant. I was a year out of university to work



Stephen Noon: 'Alex has great personal charisma and loves hearing other people's opinions'

Neville Elder

for him and then got a job in his office at the House of Commons after graduating.

Alex is a great motivator because you know that however hard you work, he is working harder. He will praise you for two minutes if you have done something well, but then it's forgotten. He also has a way of finding out what's going on in the office by leaving pauses which he knows you will fill. In your anxiety to fill the silence you can end up confessing everything, but I'm wise to this trick now.

He has another annoying habit of asking a question he knows that you don't have the answer to; but he also encourages you to challenge him. He loves hearing other people's opinions, and during a

shopping trip with his wife, for example, he may spend two hours speaking to people in the streets. He's able to dominate every room he walks into and he has great personal charisma. I even got a letter from a young chap complaining that his girlfriend had a massive crush on Alex - apparently she wouldn't stop talking about his beautiful brown eyes.

Since the '97 referendum there's been an amazing change in Scottish attitude and confidence. When you are in opposition you never really have successes, so to have a leader who actually wins something gives you credibility. I'm convinced that within 10 to 15 years Scotland will be independent, and the SNP now have to change from a wee family

firm to an international company. I enjoy the fact that I never know what's going to happen each day. I try to get in at about 8am. I read the papers, open the mail, talk with journalists, constituents and MPs, write several press releases and deal with the mechanics of booking taxis and lunches and briefing for debates. I usually don't leave until about 8pm and I sometimes work weekends, which means that it's almost impossible to have a social life or a relationship.

I do occasionally go on a bender, clubbing for six hours as a means of escape. Some MPs like to go to the football to unwind, but I have an image of myself as an MP meeting my constituents at a club.

I'm still just a wee laddie of 27,

yet already I've had the opportunity to change the most important piece of Scottish legislation that there's ever been. If the SNP wins next year I would hope that my ideas would still have access to Alex.

Politics excites me, but there are many other things I'd also like to do with my life, such as return to South Africa where I spent some time working for an anti-apartheid Catholic organisation. I was brought up by Jesuits and was deeply influenced by liberation theology.

My heroes are the priests of El Salvador who were prepared to sacrifice their own lives standing up to the dictators.

INTERVIEW BY
KATIE SAMPSON

What the chauffeur saw



THE TEMP

PAUL THE chauffeur and I have struck up a bit of a friendship, mostly because we spend a lot of time sitting around with mugs of coffee in the kitchen waiting for Oscar, who always calls for the car an hour before he really needs it. I wasn't sure about Paul at first - thought he was pretty dour - but that's mostly because I've never had a friend with a ginger moustache before, and I gather now that a ginger moustache is almost compulsory if you want to join The Regiment, which I think is the phrase that a particular type of soldier uses to avoid saying "SAS". Paul's over 40 now; he got out of The Regiment nearly a decade ago and set himself up as a chauffeur-bodyguard and security adviser.

"Fing is," he says, "iss all abahit ego, innit?"

"What do you mean?"

"Wew," says Paul, who was born in Romford and joined the army at 16 as an alternative to a life of petty crime, "people like Mr Katz darn need someone like me - vey womp der full monty so vey can few vare mates. Borin' for me, hut iss mahney, innit?"

"Mmm."

"So arze it going wiv der pussy of der year, ven?"

"Yeah, OK. All the girls in the club have been topping up their sun tans, and Leeza spent too long in a booth and practically set fire to herself. I don't think she'll be sitting down for a week."

"Not much good for a lap-dancer, is it?"

"No. She was planning to make a raid on the team from The Sun and get herself on Page Three, hut I think she's going to be confined to a pole for the duration instead."

"Got any celebs?"

"Ooh, loads. We've got half the staff of Ginger Productions, that bloke who used to do the game show with the custard pies, two blokes who used to do the afternoon shows on Radio 1, and the guy who fathered Michelle Collins's baby in the sitcom about singing telegrams."

"You done well, there, girl. Got ver full A list." He twinkles his eyes at me as he buries his nose in his mug.

Oscar pops his head round the door. "Paul," he says, "After you've dropped me off, can you come back here and take Trina to the jewellers?"

"Sure, boss," says Paul.

"What time do you fink I'll be getting off tonight, by the way?"

"Ooh," says Oscar, "About half a lemon." He closes the door and goes off to primp his hair in the bathroom. This takes some time, as you need to allow 10 minutes for each layer of spray to set before adding another.

"Well," says Paul once the door has closed, "That's Trina out of a job, then."

"How'd you know?"

"Same every time," says Paul. "New girl turns up, Mr Katz picks her out, has her on his arm for publicity photos for a month, gets his end away. Then he says to me, take her off to the jeweller and let her pick out anything she wants. The next night, she comes in to the club all happy, like, and gets given her cards. I've seen it a million times."

I get chills.

"But that's awful."

"Too right. But they fall for it every time."

"It's tantamount to prostitution."

"Well," says Paul, "That's the racket they're all in, innit?"

"God, that's terrible. Someone should do something about it."

"Don't worry," says Paul, "I have. After the fourth time I'd had some poor dip in the back of the limo, dreaming about her future as the fourth Mrs Katz, and seen what happened the next day, I went down to the jeweller where he has his account and found out what the most expensive thing they sold was. Rolex Oyster. So now, when I'm taking yer Trinas and Trixies off their shopping expedition, I roll down the window and tell them exactly what's going on and exactly what to buy. They cry and wail and I give them tissues, and there's mascara all over the upholstery, but every single one has taken my advice. They're not stupid, these girls. They know they're going to need summat to tide 'em over."

This unlikely knight in shining armour polishes off his coffee, sighs with satisfaction, puts the mug on the table. "I've cost him 80 grand so far," he says. "I'm hoping to get to at least 100 before he catches on."

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Closing date for applications is Wednesday 3rd February 1999. Please telephone for an Information Pack on 0171 831 3505 or E-mail on Enquiries@irrv.org.uk

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Required by busy Solicitors practice in Mayfair. Must be able to work on own initiative, be well organised and have current conveyancing experience. Knowledge of Word 6 is also required. Please call Diane Stewart

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Pathfinder Mental Health Services NHS Trust provides a comprehensive mental health service to children and adults living in the London boroughs of Wandsworth and Merton and a more specialist mental health service to a wider population.

Secretary to the Medical Director

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For further information about this post please contact Claire Gould, Business Support Manager to the Medical Director on 0181 772 2013.

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Joh Ref: LA/3315.020

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For further information about both these posts, please contact Suzanne Miller, Business Support Manager on 0181 682 6305.

Closing date for applications: 3rd February 1999

Recruitment packs and application forms are available from the Human Resources Department, Pathfinder NHS Trust, Springfield Hospital, 61 Glenburnie Road, Tooting SW17 7DJ. Tel 0181 682 6452 (24 hour answerphone).

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Zara White on 0171 323 4492.

مكتبة الجليل

WEDNESDAY RADIO

RADIO 1
(97.8-98.8MHz FM)
6.30 Zoe Ball, 9.00 Simon Mayo, 12.00 Kevin Greening, 2.00 Mark Radcliffe, 4.00 Chris Moyles, 5.45 Newsbeat, 6.00 Clive Warren, 8.00 Steve Lamacq - The Evening Session, 10.00 Movie Update with Mark Kermode, 10.30 John Peel, 12.00 Blue Jam, See Pick of the Day, 1.00 Gilles Peterson, 4.00 - 6.30 Scott Mills.

RADIO 2
(88-90.2MHz FM)
6.00 Sarah Kennedy, 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan, 9.30 Ken Bruce, 12.00 Jimmy Young, 2.00 Ed Stewart, 3.00 Johnnie Walker, including news, views, music, the Mystery Voice Competition, sport and regular travel updates, 7.00 Nick Barraclough, 8.00 Mike Harding, 9.00 The Andy Peebles Show: Andy Peebles presents the ninth of 13 programmes exploring the world of soul music from the 50s to the present day, 10.00 Route 66 Revisited: Nick Barraclough presents a seven-part series in which he travels across America exploring the history and cultural significance of Route 66, 10.30 Richard Ainsworth, 12.00 Katrina Leskanich, 3.00 Alex Lester.

RADIO 3
(90.2-92.4MHz FM)
6.00 On Air, 9.00 Music Works, 10.30 Artist of the Week, 11.00 Sound Stories, 12.00 Composer of the Week: Purcell, 1.00 Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert, 2.00 The BBC Orchestra, 4.00 Choral Evensong, 5.00 In Tune, 7.30 Performance on 3: Conductor Grant Llewellyn, Dalia Jones (mezzo), Hoddinott: Welsh Dances; Suite No. 3, John McEclair: Museum of the Air (first performance), Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E flat (Eroica), 9.30 Postscript, 3: 'Monet in London', The Savoy Hotel may seem an unlikely place in which to retrace the steps of a bohemian artist, but Monet was already well established and wealthy when he made a series of visits to London at the beginning of this century, painting the Thames from the balcony outside his room and reveling in the various qualities of the London fog. Tim Marlow, editor of Tate magazine, and art historian

PICK OF THE DAY

"HERE COMES the prating gravy-muncher. See him scold his shadow, raise his hat to lamp-posts - and out you run to argue with a bus". Welcome back to Blue Jam (12midnight), Chris Morris (right) and his third series of broadcasts from the solitary confinement of his deranged genius. The usual Jabberwocky-like mutterings and psychedelic samplings



Chris Morris

an John House trace Monet's London visits. 9.25 Music for Organ, David Sanger plays a selection of French music at Exeter College, Oxford - on a modern British organ in the great French romantic tradition. Langlais: Incantation pour un jour saint, D'Indy: Pre-lude in E flat minor, Op. 66, Franck: Pièce héroïque in B minor, Mulet: Rosaces (Esquisses byzantines), Vieme: Toccata in B flat minor (Pièces de fantaisie, Suite No. 2), (R) 10.00 Ensemble. A recital by the young German violinist Isabelle Faust given last December in the Wigmore Hall, London, introduced by Penny Gore, who talks to the violinist about her early years. Isabelle Faust (violin), Ewa Kupiec (piano), Mendelssohn: Violin Sonata in F (Adagio), Prokofiev: Violin Sonata No. 1, Op. 80, 10.45 Night Waves. Monet's paintings are among the most familiar and widely exploited of any artist's work, so can the Royal Academy's new exhibition offer any new insights or a fresh interpretation? Patrick Wright and guests discuss 'Monet in the 20th Century'. Plus first-night news from the opening of 'Vassa', Howard Davis directs Sheila Hancock in Gorky's comic portrait of a powerful matriarch. 11.30 Jazz Notes, 12.00 Composer of the Week: Rimsky-Korsakov, (R) 1.00 - 6.00 Through the Night.

RADIO 4
(92.4-94.9MHz FM)
6.00 Today, 9.00 NEWS: Midweek.

12.00 The Midday News
1.00 Ruscoe and Co.
4.00 Drive.
7.00 News Extra.
7.30 Five Nations Rugby Night. Nick Mullins and guests look ahead to the Five Nations championship, which starts this weekend. Plus the National Lottery Draw.
10.00 Littlejohn. Football phone-in with Richard Littlejohn: 0500 909693.
11.00 Late Night Live. With Nick Robinson, including a late news briefing at 11.00, and at 11.15 The Financial World Tonight and a topical late-night discussion.
1.00 Up All Night.
5.00 - 6.00 Morning Reports.

CLASSIC FM
(100.0-101.9MHz FM)
6.00 Nick Bailey, 8.00 Henry Kelly, 12.00 Requests, 2.00 Concerto: Glazunov: Piano Concerto No. 1 in F minor, Stephen Coombs, BBC Scottish SO/Maryn Brabbins 3.00 Jamie Cullum, 6.30 Newsnight, 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven, 9.00 Evening Concert: Brahms: Two Songs, Op. 91 Sarah Walker (soprano), Paul Silverthorne (viola), Roger Vignoles (piano). Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde, Jessye Norman (soprano), Stegried Jerusalem (tenor), Berlin Philharmonic/James Levine. Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Marjana Lipovsek (mezzo), Ernst-Seriff Chorus, Berlin PO/Claudio Abbado.
11.00 Alan Mann, 2.00 Concerto, 3.00 - 6.00 Mark Griffiths.

VIRGIN RADIO
(121.197-126.044 MHz MW 105.8MHz FM)
6.30 Chris Evans, 9.30 Russ Williams, 1.00 Nick Abbott, 4.00 Harriet Scott, 7.30 Mark Forrest, 10.00 Richard Allen, 11.00 James Merritt, 12.00 - 6.30 Jeremy Clark.

WORLD SERVICE RADIO
(98.1kHz LW)
1.00 The World Today, 1.30 Meridian (Live), 2.00 The World Today, 2.30 Everywoman, 3.00 The World Today, 3.20 Sports Roundup, 3.30 World Business Report, 3.45 Insight, 4.00 - 7.00 The World Today (400-700).

TALK RADIO
6.00 Big Boys Breakfast with David Banks & Nick Ferrari, 9.00 Scott Chisholm, 12.00 Justice with Jacobs, 1.00 Anna Rastburn, 4.00 Peter Deasy, 5.00 Sports Zone, 8.00 James Whale, 12.00 Ian Collins.

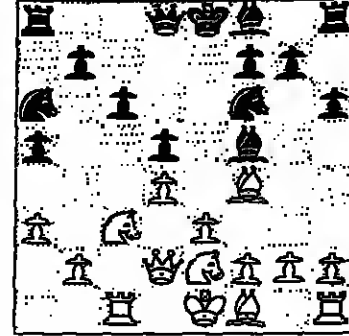
RADIO 4 LW
(98.1kHz)
9.45 - 10.00 Daily Service, 12.00 - 12.04 News, Shipping Forecast, 5.54 - 5.57 Shipping Forecast, 11.30 - 12.00 Today in Parliament.

RADIO 5 LIVE
(93.0-94.9MHz MW)
6.00 Breakfast, 9.00 Nicky Campbell.

INDEPENDENT PURSUITS

CHESS

JON SPEELMAN



THE SUPER-GRANDMASTER tournament at Wijk aan Zee on the Dutch coast is getting into its stride. Following two rounds and a rest day on Monday there was already a clear leader in the shape of Viswanathan Anand on 2/2, ahead of Topalov, Kasparov, Shirov and Kramnik on 1.5. Before the kick-off, the anglophone Argentine Michael Green-gard, who writes on the World Wide Web under the name of Mig, carried out a survey (on Mark Crowther's Home Page <http://www.chesscenter.com/twic/twic.html>). In three days, this admirable exercise enticed 1,009 voters from many countries, of whom 490 voted for Anand to win, followed by Kasparov 249, Shirov 112, Kramnik 67, Ivanchuk 42 and the rest 16 or fewer. As I wrote on Friday, I'd go for one of Kasparov, Anand and Kramnik, with Ivanchuk, Shirov and Svidler having some chances. And just two rounds have changed little (though if pressed I'd certainly plump, about 50-50, for one of Anand and Kasparov).

Perhaps the most interesting game so far was the draw, in just 22 moves, between Kasparov and Ivanchuk. Almost invariably a powerful force in the opening, Kasparov is particularly strong in the Exchange variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined (QGD), in which he has a massive score against world class opposition.

Ivanchuk's choice was therefore calculated daredevilry. The first critical moment came when Kasparov avoided the endgame after 6 e3 Bb5? 7 Qc3 Bg6 8 Bxf6 Qxf6 9 Qxf6 gxf6, with 6 Qc2, 7...Na6 seems to exploit this but in the diagram the normal 12...Be7 13 Ng3 Bb7 14 Bb3

Exd5 15 Qxd5 looks better for White. The point of Ivanchuk's rather extraordinary 12...Nd7 was, if I've understood, revealed two moves later, when if 14 Bb3 g5 15 Be5 f6 Bg8+ Ke7 White doesn't seem to get nearly enough for the piece. I suspect that if he doesn't find an improvement earlier, Kasparov will look at 15 e5 or, more likely, 15 f3! trying to maintain the centre. After 16...Qxd5, White had to force matters, 18...0-0-0 effectively acquiesced in a draw - other moves are extremely risky. And Kasparov was forced to take the perpetual check.

White: Gary Kasparov
Black: Vassily Ivanchuk
QGD Exchange Variation
1 d4 d5 (see diagram)
2 c4 e6 12...Nd7
3 Nc3 Nf6 13 Ng3 Be6
4 cxd5 exd5 14 e4 Nb6
5 Bg5 c6 15 exd5 Nxd5
6 Qc2 Na6 16 Nxd5 Qxd5!
7 e3 Nb4 17 Bc4 Qxg2
8 Qd2 Bb5 18 Qe3 0-0-0
9 Rcl a5 19 Bxe6+ fxe6
10 a3 Na6 20 Qxe6+ Rd7
11 Nge2 h6 21 Qe8+ Rds
12 Bf4 22 Qe6+ 1-2=

BRIDGE

ALAN HIRON

SOUTH PLAYED his slam contract well in this deal - indeed, he had reached a winning position - but, right at the end, West found a crafty resource that persuaded declarer to go wrong.

East opened Three Hearts, South overcalled with Three Spades, and West raised to Four Hearts. Hoping for a favourable lead (or that the contract might prove a lay-down) North jumped direct to Six Spades. All passed, although West contemplated a sacrifice in Seven Hearts (which would have cost only 800 points unless South had found an unlikely diamond lead), and West led ♠10 against the slam.

Neither of North's wishes came true - the lead did not help, and there were only 11 tricks in sight, for it seemed sure that West held ♠A. Then South saw a glimmer of light: if, indeed, West held ♠A and also length in diamonds, he might well be put under pressure. So declarer ruffed all of his heart losers on the table, coming back to hand with top trumps. Then he played off his remaining trumps.

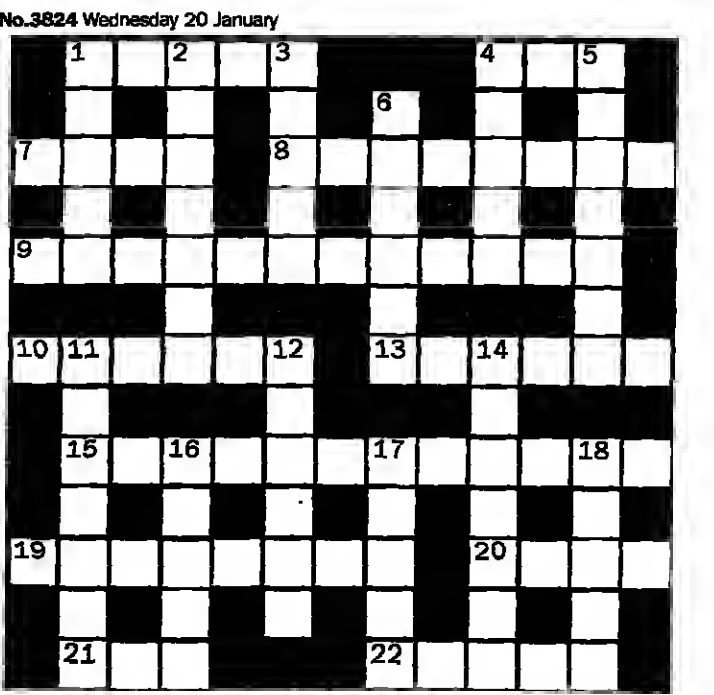
With seven cards left, West still had to find two discards from ♠J 9 8 2 ♠AQ10. If he had parted with two clubs, then dummy would come down to ♠AK ♣7 5 and a low club from declarer's hand

Game all; dealer East
North
♠10 9 7 6 5 2
♥none
♦AKQ4
♣7 5 3
East
♠none
♥AKJ 7 6 5 4
♦10 6 5
♣J 6 2
South
♠AKO 8 4
♥O 8 3
♦7 3
♣K 8 4

Convinced that West had started with five diamonds and that ♠A was now bare, South led ♣4. To his chagrin he now lost two club tricks and found he had been in a position where he could have cashed four diamonds for his contract.

The Macallan International Pairs is at the White House Hotel (at Portland St Tube), London. Sessions: today 5.30pm-11pm; Thurs 12pm-4pm, 4.45-7.55pm; Fri 12.30pm-6pm. Tickets at the door.

CONCISE CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Iron (5)
4 Pull along (3)
7 Joint (4)
8 Cross-country (8)
9 Cut-and-dried situation (4,8)
10 Timber problem (3,3)
11 Hand in notice (6)
15 Fairground attractions (7,5)
19 Tite (8)
20 Animal fat (4)
21 Old cloth measure (3)
22 Late (5)

DOWN
1 Large black-and-white animal (5)
2 German prince (7)
3 Greek philosopher (5)
4 Flower (5)
5 Lacking (7)
6 Diversion (6)
11 Accept (7)
12 Public address system (6)
14 Academic (7)
16 Fish basket (5)
17 Item of belief (5)
18 Before time (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
ACROSS: 1 Odie, 4 Alone (Eau de Cologne), 9 Aloha, 10 Grumble, 11 Oklahoma, 12 Food, 13 Swimming pools, 17 John, 18 Calculus, 21 Timpai, 22 Ingle, 23 Nurse, 24 Hall, DOWN: 2 Drell, 3 Chatham, 4 Argumentative, 5 Omas, 6 Embargo, 7 Famous, 8 Mend, 14 Inhuman, 15 Peckish, 16 System, 17 June, 19 Legal, 20 Fair.

SATELLITE AND CABLE

PICK OF THE DAY

NOT ALL AMERICAN actors have distinguished themselves in their attempts at an English accent, but, as she proved in *Sliding Doors* and *Emma* (7pm Sky Moviemax), there is no faulting Gwyneth Paltrow (right). While reminding us that we don't have a monopoly on posh women in period frocks, she sparkles in the title role of Douglas McGrath's enjoyable version of the durable romantic comedy by Jane Austen. A host



Gwyneth Paltrow

of British actors - led by Jeremy Northam as the dishy Mr Knightly and featuring Alan Cumming, Greta Scacchi, Ewan McGregor, and Juliet Stevenson - lend top-class support. With her intriguing choice of film roles - from *Pulp Fiction* to *Gattaca* - Uma Thurman stands apart from the Hollywood mainstream. She is profiled today in *Femmes Fatales* (1.30pm Sky Moviemax).

SKY PREMIER
6.00 Moby Dick (1957) (60575), 8.30 Napoleon and Samantha (1972) (76579), 10.00 Cocoon: the Return (1988) (43372), 12.00 Moby Dick (1957) (76579), 2.25 Napoleon and Samantha (1972) (76579), 4.00 Cocoon: the Return (1988) (43372), 5.55 Legend of the Ruby Silver (1996) (50503), 7.30 Darry Norman's Film Night (1997), 8.00 Absolute Power (1997) (50503), 10.00 Glimmer Man (1998) (57279), 11.35 The Crossing Guard (1996) (80073), 1.25 Dead Man Walking (1995) (61484), 3.30 - 6.00 Lucy Fel (1996) (80750).

SKY MOVIE MAX
7.30 UK Top Ten (48020), 8.00 Femmes Fatales (1998) (50503), 8.30 Movie Magic (30331), 9.00 Jules Verne's 800 Leagues down the Amazon (1994) (88694), 11.00 Emma (1996) (29556), 1.00 UK Top Ten (35550), 4.30 Femmes Fatales (1998) (50503), 5.55 Legend of the Ruby Silver (1996) (50503), 7.30 Jules Verne's 800 Leagues down the Amazon (1994) (88694), 9.00 American Hot Wax (1978) (22391), 11.00 Emma (1996) (29556), 1.00 See Pick of the Day, 9.00 Lethal Tender (1996) (54321), 11.00 House of Frankenstein: Part 1 (1957) (56770), 12.30 A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984) (61747), 2.05 The Krimlin Letter (1970) (85726), 4.05 A Switch in Time (1987) (50503), 5.35 - 7.30 American Hot Wax (1978) (22391).

SKY CINEMA
4.00 Flesh and Fury (1952) (875455), 6.00 The Magnificent Ambersons (1942) (732469), 8.00 The Big Red One (1968) (757814), 10.00 Hang 'Em High (1963) (603333), 11.55 The Day After Tomorrow (1997) (848222), 1.50 Days of Glory (1944) (3912557), 3.20 The Directors (259337), 4.30 Two Many Girls (1940) (878534), 5.45 Close.

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
4.00 Rex Hunts Fishing Adventures (1994/95), 4.30 Walker's World (1997/98), 5.00 Flightline (1994/95), 5.30 History Turning Points (1998/99), 6.00 Inside Story (1998/99), 6.30 Beyond 2000

REGIONAL TELEVISION VARIATIONS

BBC1 N IRELAND
As BBC1 London except: 6.30 Newsline 6.30 (643).

BBC1 SCOTLAND
As BBC1 London except: 2.55 Dotman (349759), 3.10 Dochelach Mor (Dakota Dole) (873440), 6.00 News (391), 6.30 Reporting Scotland: Weather (643), 9.30 One Foot in the Grave (1948), 10.00 Cheviot, the Cat & the Cheese (1984/85), 11.25 The X-Files (114049), 12.10 Film: Lust for Murder (1981/82), 1.35 John's BBC News 24 (828357).

BBC1 WALES
As BBC1 London except: 6.30 News Today (843), 10.15 The Sleds (887440), 10.45 Inside Story (44952), 11.40 Film: Lust for Murder (1981/82), 1.05 Film: Moving Target (1988/89), 2.35 John's BBC News 24 (847335).

BBC2
As BBC2 London except: 12.20 Central News and Weather (674391), 1.00 Echo Point (1955), 3.20 Central News (723533), 5.40 Shortland Street (705740), 6.00 Home and Away (58838), 6.25 Central News and Weather (674391), 10.30 Central News and Weather (674391), 11.45 Renegade (115827), 4.35 Jobfinder (891082), 5.20 Asian Eye (408897).

MTV WALES
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (2490175), 12.15 MTV News (1955), 1.00 Shortland Street (705740), 1.30 MTV News (1955), 2.00 Home and Away (757402), 5.37 Three Minutes (23310), 6.30 Meridian Tonight (759), 8.30 Eurocatch with Chris Packham (839), 10.30 Meridian News (83965), 11.45 Baywatch Nights (820198), 12.40 Film: Between Love and Hate (44150), 2.20 Master Class (1972/88), 4.45 Judge Judy (4573), 4.45 Pure Lethal (360421), 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3708632), 5.00 Coronation Street (56866).

Wales Tonight (118914), 11.45 The Front Row (820198), 12.40 Film: Between Love and Hate (44150), 2.20 Master Class (1972/88), 4.45 Judge Judy (4573), 4.45 Pure Lethal (360421), 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3708632), 5.00 Coronation Street (56866).

HTV WEST
As HTV Wales except: 1.00 Nest Stop, (1955), 6.25 HTV West Tonight (10572), 6.30 The West Tonight (339), 11.45 Renegade (820198).

MERIDIAN
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (2490175), 12.15 Meridian News (1955), 1.00 Shortland Street (705740), 1.30 Meridian News (1955), 2.00 Home and Away (757402), 5.37 Three Minutes (23310), 6.30 Meridian Tonight (759), 8.30 Eurocatch with Chris Packham (839), 10.30 Meridian News (83965), 11.45 Baywatch Nights (820198), 12.40 Film: Between Love and Hate (44150), 2.20 Master Class (1972/88), 4.45 Judge Judy (4573), 4.45 Pure Lethal (360421), 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3708632), 5.00 Coronation Street (56866).

WESTCOUNTRY
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (2490175), 12.15 Westcountry News (1955), 1.00 Shortland Street (705740), 1.30 Westcountry News (1955), 2.00 Home and Away (757402), 5.37 Three Minutes (23310), 6.30 Westcountry Tonight (759), 8.30 Eurocatch with Chris Packham (839), 10.30 Westcountry News (83965), 11.45 Baywatch Nights (820198), 12.40 Film: Between Love and Hate (44150), 2.20 Master Class (1972/88), 4.45 Judge Judy (4573), 4.45 Pure Lethal (360421), 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3708632), 5.00 Coronation Street (56866).

YORKSHIRE
As Carlton except: 10.30 This Morning (2490175), 12.15 Yorkshire News (1955), 1.00 Shortland Street (705740), 1.30 Yorkshire News (1955), 2.00 Home and Away (757402), 5.37 Three Minutes (23310), 6.30 Yorkshire Tonight (759), 8.30 Eurocatch with Chris Packham (839), 10.30 Yorkshire News (83965), 11.45 Baywatch Nights (820198), 12.40 Film: Between Love and Hate (44150), 2.20 Master Class (1972/88), 4.45 Judge Judy (4573), 4.45 Pure Lethal (360421), 4.50 ITV Nightscreen (3708632), 5.00 Coronation Street (56866).

East News Headlines (275293), 5.55 North East Tonight (200846), 6.00 North East Tonight (5533), 10.30 North East News and Weather (832965).

S4C
As Channel 4 except: 9.00 Ysgolir/Schools (1063381), 12.00 Be-witched (834294), 12.30 Soane Street (884778), 1.00 Panned Plant (477681), 1.30 Roots to Success (891288), 1.45 Day of Thanks on Walton Mountain (340202), 4.30 Field Lake (835824), 5.00 Panned Plant (835824), 5.30 Dr. Katz (5572), 2.30 Soap (88044), 3.00 Wings (8624), 3.30 Nightstand (86484), 4.00 Close.

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WEDNESDAY TELEVISION

THE WEDNESDAY REVIEW
The Independent 20 January 1989



ROBERT HANKS TELEVISION REVIEW

ALLIED, HOLLY CITY (BBC1) is a spin-off from *Conan*, but in what sense is it a spin-off? It doesn't have the same production team - it's even made in the same part of Britain - or any of the same stars. True, a girl who went into a coma in last week's *Conan* turned up three days later, still completely immobile, in *Holly City*. And, every so often the viewer gets a distant glimpse of Charlie Richardson, the character who, in the most part, the relationship seems to be a purely notional device for guaranteeing a basic level of ratings - likewise the casting of former soap stars Michael Troughton and Angela Griffin.

Still, it's a creditably smart and efficient piece of engineering, and I probably ought to admit to taking a sneaky, not-brotherly pleasure from it. The storylines play the plausibility out a little too far, perhaps, and the writers are too ready to adopt to cliché (week two, and already Nick Jordan and the new ward sister are having heated conversations about how she would have taken the job if she'd known he was working there). While the plot revolves around smart, earnest, middle-class young doctors being put in their place by people who may not be so smart, but know more about the Coby surgical registrar, Nick Jordan inadvertently stuck up a row between a terminal patient's children and their stepmother, and was put in the place by the new ward sister. Meanwhile, academically bright Dr Merrick saved a patient while with ideas about a new and incurable nervous disorder before the patient set her straight with his homely wisdom accumulated over a lifetime in hospital. Only Mr Meyer, the consultant surgeon, is allowed to get away with being clever, but he is a heartless automaton.

When comparing *Holly City* with the real-life medical drama of Monday night's *Thames* (BBC1), what strikes you is the degree of convergence between the genres of fiction and documentary. *Thames*, then, set in the accident and emergency department of the John Radcliffe hospital in Oxford, follows what would once have been the conventions of popular drama. It sets up a number of concurrent

storylines as the docu-cops cope with a mixture of domestic and professional trauma. Even the jump-cuts and music-video lurches into close-up, which would once have given it the stamp of authenticity, have since been appropriated by drama. Here they feel like a pose, a style which has been chosen rather than imposed by working conditions. It didn't help that this week's opening episode began on such a sensational note with a man who had had his arm bitten off by a tiger and, unexpect, gave the answer "tiger" when asked if he was allergic to anything. By contrast, *Holly City* seems a very conservative piece of film-making, and far more concerned to show the viewer authentically, welcome surgery. The line between fiction and documentary hasn't vanished yet, but it's fading. That's why I can't be healthy.

A similar desire to cross up the facts afflicted *Station X* (C4), a new four-part series about the code-breaking operations at Bletchley Park. It opened with a reconstruction of the night in 1948 when all Bletchley Park's documentation was burned to prevent the secret getting out. Then, later on, we were treated to odd little dramatized moments - shots of hands moving across tables strewn with tea-sacks, the air thick with cigarette smoke - apparently to express the lack of intrigue. As far as the actual mechanics of code-breaking and the Bletchley machine went, the programme whirled out a little - its explanations were too brief to make the technicalities palatable. You wondered if the producers really respected the "havers" intelligence, particularly when the commentary felt it necessary to refer to "the Italian Rascal, Muscatelli".

This was compensated for, though, by the coherences themselves - elderly, respectable people who looked back with a winking mixture of pride and embarrassment at the bright young things they were. One told how, when an estimated came to the studio, the code-breakers, they spent their time transcribing him into leading again. A really white-washed view. I liked the story of the man's biography, recruited because his specialty was cryptograms - a primitive life-form - and some body thought that that was the same as cryptograms. Truly, this was our finest hour.

BBC1

- 6.00 **Business Breakfast** (60372) 7.00 **News** (1) (68001).
- 8.00 **Kitty** (1) (64458), 9.45 **The Verdict Show** (1) (68533), 10.35 **News** (1) (68533), 11.25 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 11.50 **Real Home** (1) (68533), 12.25 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 12.50 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 1.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 1.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 1.50 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 2.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 2.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 3.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 3.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 4.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 4.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 5.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 5.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 6.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 6.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 7.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 7.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 8.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 8.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 9.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 9.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 10.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 10.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 11.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 11.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 12.00 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 12.30 **Cartoon** (1) (68533), 1.00 **Cartoon** (1) 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